The University of Texas
Institute of Latin-American Studies
Latin-American Studies, XI

REPORT

that

DR. MIGUEL RAMOS DE ARIZPE

Priest of Borbon, and Deputy in the Present General and Special Cortes of Spain for the Province of Coahuila One of the Four Eastern Interior Provinces of the Kingdom of Mexico

Presents

to

THE AUGUST CONGRESS
ON THE NATURAL, POLITICAL AND CIVIL CONDITION OF
the Provinces of Coahuila, Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander,
and Texas of the
Four Eastern Interior Provinces
of the
Kingdom of Mexico

Translation, Annotations and Introduction

by

NETTIE LEE BENSON

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS
AUSTIN
1950

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Introduction

Ideas committed to print have brought men imprisonment and suffering throughout recorded history. This treatment, however, has not kept thinking men from continuing to benefit the world with the expression of their ideas. Such a man was José Miguel Ramos Arizpe, who spent six years in Spanish prisons because he dared to present to the Spanish Cortes his *Report on the Natural, Political and Civil Condition of the Provinces of Coahuila, Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander and Texas of the Four Eastern Interior Provinces of the Kingdom of Mexico, with an Exposition of the Defects of the System in General, Especially the Government, and of the Reforms and Improvements Necessary to their Prosperity,* Cádiz, 1812.

This report, presented to the Cortes of Cádiz, on November 7, 1811, was the fruit of thirty-six years of life on the semi-savage frontier of northern New Spain. During these years Ramos Arizpe had experienced life in the fertile agricultural valley of San Nicolás de la Capellanía (now Ramos Arizpe, Coahuila) in the bustling commercial city of Saltillo, which was the trading center for all the vast Eastern Interior Provinces, in the important cultural and religious town of Monterrey, Nuevo León, where the episcopal see was located, and in the small frontier villages of Aguayo (now Ciudad Victoria), Villagrán, Güémez, and Padilla in the present state of Tamaulipas. He was not unacquainted with life in the cultural centers. In Guadalajara he had spent several years in the seminary and the royal university and had received there the degrees of bachelor of law and of doctor of canon law. In Mexico City, the capital of New Spain, he had been ordained as a priest in 1803, and in the summer of 1810 he had passed the examinations of the Law School of the University of Mexico and had been admitted to practice. He was, thus, well prepared by experience and education to present this report on the conditions—economic, social, political, and civil—of his beloved Eastern Interior Provinces.

Born on the northern frontier of New Spain, in San Nicolás, on February 15, 1775, Ramos Arizpe had come to love the land and to honor work. Hence in speaking of agriculture, he says that it is "the source of the true wealth of nations, the worthy occupation of man, the principal foundation of the most solid happiness of the citizen and the most secure wealth of the state." Again in describing the people of these provinces he says:

> Agriculture has in general formed their character, and as they have been employed day and night in the harvest and systematic cultivation of the soil, from which alone they derive their sustenance, they are truly inflexible to intrigue, virtuously steadfast, haters of tyranny and disorder, justly devoted to true liberty and naturally the most inclined toward all the moral and political virtues.

Truly Ramos Arizpe was a "hater of tyranny and justly devoted to true liberty," for his report denounces all forms of autocracy and tyranny. It shows him a vigorous devotee of local and provincial autonomy. Whether intentionally or not, he here planted the seed that produced federalism in Mexico. In his support of local and provincial self-government, he proposed that a popularly-elected provincial deputation be set up to control the internal government of the provinces. While the idea of provincial councils was not original with Ramos Arizpe, the name deputation used in this sense was of his own coining. And through his ceaseless effort, by the time that Mexico had gained her independence from Spain, a popularly-elected provincial deputation had been established legally in each of the thirteen intendancies of Mexico. According to Lucas Alamán, it was these bodies that had made a federal government inevitable in Mexico. As Ramos Arizpe was the author of the Mexican federal constitution of 1824, one cannot but wonder whether this advocacy of the provincial deputation was coincidental or a part of a preconceived long-range plan looking toward the development of Mexican federalism.

That he firmly believed in local and provincial autonomy is demonstrated most clearly in this report. Eight months after his arrival in Cádiz, he proposed on October 1, 1811, that popularly-elected municipal councils be established in all communities of thirty or more property owners and that a popularly-elected provincial deputation be established in the Eastern Interior Provinces. It was in support of these proposals that he presented his Report to the Cortes on November 7. Because nearly all of his proposals were adopted by the Cortes and put into effect in the New World, this document certainly deserves careful study by students of Mexican history and economy.

Ramos Arizpe did not limit his proposals to purely political reforms. He had a broad vision of the need for economic and educational improvements. Antedating Alberdi, Bello, Sarmiento, and other thinkers of Latin America, he sets forth many of the precepts that they were later to uphold. He felt that one of the greatest causes of the ills of the provinces was underpopulation. Thus he devoted all of section 27 of his report to the discussion of this problem and recommended that the government make every effort to populate this region. Significantly he did not think that

legislation alone would solve the problem but believed that the government would have to do more than just legislate.

In two different sections he discussed the economic and commercial problems of the provinces. In the introduction of section 17 he set forth clearly his knowledge of sound economics and concluded with the telling question:

> Of what advantage can it be to the hungry to have flour if it costs more than the whole is worth to make it into bread?

In section 29 he proposed that industry and commerce should be encouraged and developed by the establishment of special bodies for this purpose.

He set a high value on education. He said that "public education is one of the first duties of every wise government" and that "only despots and tyrants keep the populace in ignorance in order the more easily to violate their rights." At another time he asserted that as public schools and academies were the first basis of general happiness and prosperity, the Cortes should promulgate a general system of public education. And throughout his term in the Cortes from 1811 to 1814 and from 1820 to 1821, he exerted all his influence to bring about the realization of this idea.

When a condition existed that needed correction, Ramos Arizpe believed that the facts should be made known so that justice could be done. He said that it was necessary "to be honest and consider notorious truths however unpleasant they may seem, for full knowledge of them will not only convince us that despotism has been the common evil of both the peninsula and America, but it will lead us to recognize clearly the necessity of changing the methods or systems . . . ." At another time he asserted:

> . . . he who neither knows how nor wishes to govern justly his own house cannot know how nor wish to govern well the stranger's into which he enters by force.

And in line with this statement and speaking of existing conditions, he continued:

> And as might has prevailed, the most sacred rights of man have been trodden under foot and measures adopted to insure on the throne and in its surroundings stupidity, arbitrary power, despotism, and a thousand times vice itself. To this end, the other aggregates of ignorance were utilized. The study of natural law and the rights of man was prohibited.

It is not surprising then that when Ferdinand VII returned to the Spanish throne in 1814 and reinstated the arbitrary government which Ramos Arizpe had so strongly condemned, he was one of the first to be imprisoned. He was held "incomunicado" in an obscure jail in Madrid for almost twenty months and was then

condemned to four years confinement in a Carthusian Monastery near Valencia.

One of the charges brought against him was that on February 10, 1814, in speaking on absolute power for the king, he had said:

> This great country trusts in us! . . . it would be better to have succumbed to the French yoke, if we are to deprive it [the country] of its rights.

And when the attempt was made to buy him over to Ferdinand's cause, his answer was:

> I have not left my land to beg favors of despotism; the mission that was intrusted to me is one of honor and not of profit.

One of his most illuminating replies was made during his trial, when the judge, in an effort to catch him in a mis-statement, asked where in his opinion sovereignty resided, in the king or in the nation. Ramos Arizpe's prompt rejoinder was:

> Locked up here, I cannot know. Allow me to go out to look at society and I shall return to prison to answer your question.

For his liberalism, he spent six years in prison. But during this period his influence was being felt throughout America through his *Report*. It was published first in Cádiz in 1812 by the Imprenta de D. José María Guerrero, calle de el Empedrador número 191. In 1813, it was reprinted in Guadalajara, México, by the oficina de D. José Fruto Romero, and in the same year it appeared in London in the February and March numbers of the monthly publication *El Español*, published by Don J. Blanco White. An English translation of it, with various omissions, was printed in 1814, for John Melish by G. Palmer of Philadelphia. John Melish, in 1816, in a section called "Geographical Intelligence" of his book *A Geographical Description of the United States with the Contiguous British and Spanish Possessions . . .* , advertizes this translation as follows:

> This is a most interesting memoir, and will be found peculiarly useful in illustrating the part of the map of the Spanish possessions to which it has reference.

The Spanish government in Mexico recognized the danger of its influence, for on October 27, 1818, the inquisition in Mexico classified it as seditious and subversive.

Its value was recognized also by later Mexican and American editors. At the time that Texas held first place in the thought of both Mexico and the United States, it again was read by many people. In 1836, it appeared in Mexico in two important newspapers. The *Gaceta del Gobierno de Zacatecas* began running it

on February 21, 1836, Año 8, No. 1037 and continued it in succeeding numbers through March, April, and May. The *Diario del Gobierno de la República Mexicana* began it with the March 14 issue, and ran it until May 24, 1836. In the United States, John S. Skinner, editor of *The Plough, the Loom and the Anvil,* in a letter to the editor of the *National Intelligencer,* Washington, Thursday, July 12, 1849, entitled "The Río Grande—Is It or Was It, Ever the True Boundary of Texas?" refers to a "Translation of an address presented to the Cortes of Spain in the year of 1813 by Doctor Don Miguel Arispe . . . ." He speaks of the translation as an "old manuscript address which fell into the hands of our friend Commodore Porter." He then quotes from the manuscript various passages in which Ramos Arizpe speaks of the Río Grande and the Medina River as if they were one and the same river. The *Texas State Gazette,* Austin, Texas, Saturday, September 1, 1849, refers to this letter by John S. Skinner and quotes the passages taken from Ramos Arizpe's report.

In recent years there have been at least two editions published in Spanish. In 1932, Bibliófilos Mexicanos of Mexico City published an edition entitled *Dr. Miguel Ramos Arizpe Memoria Sobre el Estado de las Provincias Internas de Oriente Presentada a las Córtes de Cádiz Noticias Biográficas y Notas por Vito Alessio Robles.* And in 1942 the Universidad Nacional Autonoma of Mexico published an edition entitled *Miguel Ramos Arizpe Discursos, Memorias e Informes, Notas Biográficas y Bibliográficas y Anotaciones de Vito Alessio Robles.*

It is always difficult to know just how great an influence such a work as Ramos Arizpe's *Report* had upon the people of his time. It was well known to thinking men of Spain, England, South America, and Mexico, as well as to those of the United States who were interested in the present and future of the countries to the south.

It was the first available comprehensive account of the four Eastern Interior Provinces of North America—their location, their vast extent, their climate, their abundant and varied products, their industries, and their government. Other accounts had been written earlier concerning parts of the region. Nicolás de Lafora traversed the main roads of the provinces of Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Texas between August and December, 1767, and kept a log in which he frequently commented on the richness of these provinces in minerals and wild life of all kinds.[1] Lino Nepomuceno Gómez,

[1]Nicolás de Lafora, *Relación del Viage que Hizo a los Presidios Internos Situados en la Frontera de la América Septentrional Perteneciente al Rey de España con un Luminar Bibliográfico y Acotaciones por Vito Alessio Robles.*

in his report on the missions of Nuevo Santander, which he inspected in 1770, remarked frequently in glowing terms on the natural wealth of that province.[2] Fray Agustín de Morfí, accompanying Teodoro de Croix on his tour of the Interior Provinces, kept a diary of the trip. Morfí's account covering the provinces of Coahuila and Texas was far more comprehensive and more filled with wonder over the abundance and variety of the wild life, both plant and animal, of the region than those of Lafora and Gómez.[3] None of these accounts was published, however, until long after Ramos Arizpe's. Whether Ramos Arizpe had access to any of them is not known. He did use the eulogistic description of Texas written by Bishop Primo Feliciano Marín de Porras after his visit to the province in 1805.[4] Ramos Arizpe, furthermore, had a personal acquaintance with the provinces, having been born and reared in them and having served two years under Marín de Porras as collector of contributions to the diocese of Linares and legal adviser and vicar-general of Monterrey and as priest for several years in the towns of Aguayo, Güémez, and Padilla.

Ramoz Arizpe's account is valuable to us for its description of the economic, civil, and political conditions of the Eastern Interior Provinces at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Perhaps his enthusiasm for the region caused him to exaggerate sometimes, as when he said that Texas "abounds with . . . coffee and tea." Even here, however, one cannot be sure that he was exaggerating, for coffee *(café)* and especially tea *(té)* in Spanish are often used as generic terms for common beverages and therefore difficult to translate. When he spoke of the leagues of tea growing in the province of Tamaulipas, he was not necessarily exaggerating, for there the tea of New Spain *(té de Nueva España* or *té de Méjico)* grew wild in abundance.[5] As for tea in Texas, Marín de Porras

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[2]Lino Nepomuceno Gómez, *Visita a la Colonia del Nuevo Santander, Hecha por el Licenciado Don Lino Nepomuceno Gómez, el Año de 1770. Introducción: Enrique A. Cervantes.*

[3]Juan Agustín de Morfí, "Viage de Indios y Diario de Nuevo México" in *Documentos para la Historia de México,* Tercera Serie, Tomo I, 372–487.

[4]Primo Feliciano Marín de Porras, "Noticias Curiosas del Nuevo Reino de León," in *Diario de México,* XIV, No. 10993 (March 18, 1811), 309–312 and *Registro Oficial del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos,* Año 2, Tomo IV, No. 59 (February 28, 1831), 234–235.

[5]The plant *epazote* or *pazote,* also known as *té de Nueva España* or *té de Méjico,* is a plant belonging to the *Quenopodiáceas* family whose scientific name is *Chenopodium ambrosoides.* It was a native of America and was much sought after by the Spaniards, especially the Catalans. *Diccionario Enciclopédico Hispano-Americano de Literatura, Ciencias y Artes,* XX, 401; *Apéndice al Diccionario Universal de Historia y de Geografía,* III, 478; Alfonso Luis Velasco, *Geografía y Estadística de la República Mexicana,* XII, 56.

wrote of leagues of a plant in Texas used as tea by the Indians there[6]. Ramos Arizpe may have heard also from Marín de Porras of some substitute used by the Indians of Texas as coffee,[7] for even today there are various drinks in Mexico called coffee that are not made from the genuine coffee berries. It should be noted, furthermore, that Ramos Arizpe in his statements relative to tea and coffee was referring to wild or uncultivated plants, for when he discussed the agricultural products of the provinces, he mentioned neither. After reading the now printed accounts of Lafora, Gómez, Morfí, and Marín de Porras and the description of these provinces by Luis Alfonso Velasco in his *Geografía y Estadística de la República Mexicana,* one cannot but conclude that Ramos Arizpe's *Report* is, on the whole, as he said, "a conservative rather than an exaggerated picture of the natural condition of the four Eastern Interior Provinces of North America" at that time, and hence its value today.

Probably its greatest importance to the present age, however, is the insight it gives into the character and ideas of the father of the Mexican Constitution of 1824, which served as the framework of the present Mexican Constitution.

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[6]Marín de Porras, "Noticias Curiosas . . . ," *op. cit.*

[7]Coffee at that date (1811) was not cultivated extensively in Mexico. Alexander de Humboldt said in his *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain,* III, 22, that in 1804 "its production amounts yet to nothing, though it can hardly be doubted that this species of cultivation would succeed perfectly well in the temperate regions. . . ." He said that 272 quintals of coffee were exported from Mexico to Spain in 1802 and 474 quintals, in 1803. *Op. cit.,* IV, 37, 47.

SIR:

My duty as representative of the Province of Coahuila, or new Extremadura, one of the four Eastern Interior Provinces in North America, imperatively compels me to explain to Your Majesty[1] what I judge to be absolutely necessary for its well-being and for the general welfare of all the nation. The provinces of Nuevo Reyno de León,[2] Nuevo Santander,[3] and Texas, or the new Philippines, that border on Coahuila, all have common interests intimately bound with those of Coahuila; and as their elected representatives have not arrived for this august Congress, I find myself obliged to speak of the present condition of all of them.

The lack of interest or abandon with which for centuries past governments have looked upon these vast provinces has deprived Your Majesty of exact knowledge of their locality, extent, climate, native products, population, agriculture, arts, commerce, and administration. Up to the present the only thought given to them politically has been to send to each a military commander with the title of governor, who, with no other knowledge than that of a simple drill manual, has governed his assigned province with a military hand and despotically directed all branches of public administration. Such a shocking state of affairs obliges me to digress a little in order to touch briefly on what I believe to be indispensable to the imparting of an idea of the nature of those enviable provinces, of their civil and political condition, of the evils from which they suffer, and of the improvements requisite to their prompt realization of that degree of prosperity which will necessarily promote the general welfare of the nation. I do not doubt for a moment that Your Majesty will agree to adopt those measures to which these provinces have long been entitled and which they, basing their claims on the principles of justice and mutual interest, now request through my voice.

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[1]One of the first acts of the national Cortes of Spain, when it met in 1810, was to declare that it should be addressed as "Su Majestad" (Your Majesty). Spain. Cortes, *Diario de las Discusiones y Actas de las Cortes*, I, 6–8.

[2]Henceforth in this translation the present form, that of Nuevo Léon, will be used.

[3]Henceforth in this translation the present name for the province of Nuevo Santander, Tamaulipas, will be used.

EXTENT AND LOCAL CONDITIONS OF THE FOUR EASTERN INTERIOR PROVINCES

No. 2. These four fabulously rich provinces located north of New Spain occupy an area on the Mexican Gulf of more than five hundred leagues in length and two hundred and twenty leagues in width. Nature, at the same time that she bound them together by easy communication across their vast plains, the common course of their rivers, and the necessarily reciprocal trade of their varied products, raised impenetrable barriers between them and New Spain and the Western Interior Provinces. All along the west and along much of the south rises a chain of high sierras, across which the only practical pass for vehicles is to be found in the town of Saltillo, with a few others difficult even for cavalry to negotiate.

COAHUILA

No. 3. The province of Coahuila is bounded on the south by the provinces of San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas, on the west by that of Nueva Vizcaya, on the north by the provinces of New Mexico and Texas, and on the east by the provinces of Tamaulipas and Nuevo León. Its territory is more than two hundred leagues in length and about a hundred leagues in width. Located on a higher level and divided naturally by different branches of the Sierra Madre that protect it from the intolerable north winds common to the coast, the province enjoys the purest breezes and a healthful climate that is generally mild and agreeable, except in the south, where it is somewhat cold. Its soil is fertilized in the northeast by the bountiful Río Medina or Bravo del Norte,[4] commonly known as the Río Grande, which divides this province from that of Texas. There are also the rivers of Mecillas,[5] Santo Domingo,[6] Nadadores,[7] and Santa Rosa.[8] It has the inexhaustible lakes of Santa Rosa[9] and

[4]Ramos Arizpe evidently has here confused the Río Grande or Bravo del Norte with the Medina that lies north of the Río Grande.

[5]Probably he is referring to the small stream known by the names of Saltillo, Pueblo, or Presa that runs through Saltillo and Mesillas and which, uniting with the small stream known as the Patos or Anhelo takes the name of the Salinas River. Miguel Ramos Arizpe, *Discursos, Memorias e Informes*, 94, note 9; Alfonso Luis Velasco, *Geografía y Estadística de la República Mexicana*, XIX, 33.

[6]This stream runs almost parallel to the Mecillas and flows into the Patos or Anhelo River. Ramos Arizpe, *op. cit.*, 94, note 10.

[7]This stream is called also the Salado de los Nadadores and on flowing into the Sabinas River, it forms the Salado River. *Ibid.*, note 11.

[8]The Sabinas River that begins near the city of Múzquiz and was formerly called Santa Rosa María del Sacramento. *Ibid.*, note 12; Velasco, *op. cit.*, XIX, 31.

[9]This lake cannot be definitely identified. Possibly he is referring to lake Agua Verde, which lies to the west of the Sierra de Santa Rosa. *Ibid.*, 34.

of Parras, as well as many other lakes that are wont to dry up. It possesses, furthermore, innumerable springs. The springs and streams in the jurisdiction of the town of Saltillo alone number as many as the days of the year. In the hacienda of Sardinas,[10] there are eighteen that equal and exceed many rivers of Europe. Although all these have delicious, fresh water, there are sulphurous springs, such as those in the district of Anhelo,[11] whose waters are very healthful. Its fields and mountains are covered with varied, nutritious forage for raising all kinds of livestock, particularly sheep and goats. Its forests contain all kinds of woods and abound with all species of game. Mines of saltpeter, copperas, alum, lead, tin, and copper are found throughout its extent, and the wealth of the land is amply proved by the rich silver mines of Santa Rosa and the gold mines of the Hill of Sacramento. Many barbarous nations, now extinct, once inhabited the province, which today is harassed along its northern frontier by the Lipans and Comanches and on the west by the Apaches and the Mescaleros.

NUEVO LEÓN

No. 4. The province of Nuevo León is one hundred leagues in length and about fifty leagues in width. Except in the towns of Río Blanco[12] and Labradores,[13] located within the Sierra Madre, the climate of all the province, because of its low altitude, is hot. And in the interior the places nearest the sierra are unhealthy. Hardly any other province has more abundant rivers, not to mention the many small streams and even hot springs. The rivers Boca de Leones,[14] Salado, Sabinas, Salinas, Pesquería Grande, and Valle de San Pedro[15] have their origin in the province of Coahuila to the west. The rivers Santa Efigenia or Boca de San Juan,[16]

[10]A ranch located about equidistant between Monclova and Cuatro Ciénegas. *Mapa del Estado de Coahuila de Zaragoza,* Lit. J. B. de León, Saltillo, 1880; Velasco, *op. cit.,* 86.

[11]A ranch located in the Saltillo district north of the town of Ramos Arizpe. *Ibid.,* 126.

[12]This place is now known as Aramberri. Velasco, *Geografía y Estadística de la República Mexicana,* IV, 169.

[13]This place is now known as Galeana. *Ibid.,* 163.

[14]This stream is known variously as the Villaldama River, the Bustamante River, and the Arroyo de Tlaxcala. Ramos Arizpe, *op. cit.,* 95, note 21; Velasco, *op. cit.,* IV, 15, 43, 47.

[15]Alessio Robles says that this is probably the Santa Catarina River, formerly known also as Las Palmas River. Ramos Arizpe, *op. cit.,* 95, note 22.

[16]Boca de San Juan River flows into the San Juan River and is formed by the union of the Arroyo Puerco, the Arroyo del Puente de Dolores, and the Arroyo de la Chueca. Velasco, *op. cit.,* 132.

Ramos, Pilón, Cabezones,[17] Camacho,[18] and Pablillo[19] have their origin in the mountain range to the south. After running the width of the province, they flow into the gulf, some emptying through the mouth of the Río Grande or Bravo del Norte and others through the mouth of the San Fernando River. The extremely fertile soil is covered with abundant forage, but the forests shelter wolves, *leones* (mountain lions), *tigres* (jaguars), wildcats, and coyotes, all of which do much damage to the livestock. The province teems with all kinds of game, and the rivers and mountains have an abundance of fine, large timbers and medicinal herbs, roots, and shrubs. There are many beds of saltpeter, sulphur, copperas, lead, tin, and silver, and the wealth of La Iguana[20] marks and always will mark an epoch in the annals of silver mining, since no other mine like it has been found in the kingdom. The silver was cut out with chisels, without the necessity at times of its being smelted except in order to conform to law and in order to coin it. Such treasures lie abandoned there. Although many barbarous nations, especially the fierce Tobosos and Hualahuises, inhabited this province, today none remains but a small number of the Hualahuises in the mission of San Cristóbal,[21] four leagues southeast of the city of Linares.

NUEVO SANTANDER (TAMAULIPAS)

No. 5. The province of Tamaulipas extends one hundred and forty leagues from north to south and some seventy leagues from east to west. It is located on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico and has in its territory the ports of Altamira, Soto la Marina, Carboneras at the mouth of the San Fernando River, and the Brazo de Santiago at the mouth of the Río Grande and of the Medina,[22] which is navigable by brigantines for sixty leagues. The entrance to the port of Brazo de Santiago is protected by the islands of the Malahuitas and Caikaches, and there is always at least thirteen feet of water over the bar and a fair anchorage. All the province is level except the fertile valleys occupied by the towns of Tula,

[17]Alessio Robles says this is probably the river of Potosí that has its source near Galeana. Ramos Arizpe, *op. cit.*, 95, note 24.

[18]The Camacho River is fed by the Pabillo River and the Hualahuises River and the arroyos of Camachito and Laja. Velasco, *op. cit.*, 151–152.

[19]This stream is also called the Linares River. *Ibid.*, 17.

[20]A rich mine situated near Villaldama but now abandoned. Ramos Arizpe, *op. cit.*, 95, note 27.

[21]This place is now known as Hualahuises. Velasco, *op. cit.*, IV, 149.

[22]Here again Ramos Arizpe confuses the Río Grande River and the Medina River. According to the description he gives here, however, he is thinking of the Río Grande, not the Medina.

Palmillas, Jaumave, and Real de los Infantes[23] within the Sierra Madre and the two ranges of the old and new Tamaulipas in the center of the province. Although the climate of the four towns within the mountain range is cold, that of all the rest of the province, though hot, is generally very healthy. In the evenings and nights the gulf breeze that prevails in the summer is very refreshing. From a section only seventy leagues in length of the Sierra Madre, which lies to the west of the larger part of the province, descend, besides other small streams and cascades, the rivers of the Piloncito or Anegados (which divides the province from Nuevo León and separates the parishes of Linares and Borbón),[24] the Barranca, the Real de Borbón,[25] the Alamos, the Meco, the Hoyos, the Purificación, the Meca, the Santa Engracia, the San Pedro, the Boca de Caballeros, the Misión de Indios Pizones, the Aguayo, the Boca de Santa Lucía, the large and abundant Yera,[26] and the Frío, notable for its dense, white, foul-smelling water. All of these rivers, running over the surface of such a vast area, seem to offer themselves voluntarily to the fertilization of the fields and to the supplying of fish of all kinds. After several junctures, they enter the gulf through the four ports cited. The mountains, forests, and river banks contain all species of timbers known to America. There is even the rock wood, so-called because it petrifies quickly in water. Besides supplying much large and small game, the valleys and hills produce leagues of tea, indigo, and wild cochineal of very good quality, the best sarsaparilla, and innumerable useful medicinal herbs. Also this province more than any other abounds in mines of saltpeter, copperas, alum, niter, lead, and tin. Its copper, in the opinion of experts, is of the best quality, and the Sierra Madre as well as the two interior sierras of Tamaulipas are exceedingly rich in silver, which is visible at the surface. Also veins of gold and gold dust are found. Your Majesty will see in this document the reason for their absolute abandonment.

TEXAS

No. 6. The province of Texas, located also on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, has on the east among other ports those of the bay

[23]This place is now known as Bustamante. Velasco, *Geografía y Estadística de la República Mexicana*, XII, 157.

[24]This place is now Villagrán. *Ibid.*, 122.

[25]This is now the Villagrán River or Creek.

[26]This is now spelled Llera.

of San Bernardo[27] and of Arcokisas,[28] perhaps the best ports in all the kingdom. On the south it borders on part of Tamaulipas and Coahuila, from which the Río Grande[29] separates it. On the west the great mountain chain of the Sierra Madre separates it from New Mexico, and on the northeast is the frontier of the United States and the boundaries of Louisiana. It is more than three hundred leagues in length and more than one hundred leagues in width. Because of the purity of its air, its climate is very healthful, though the sun is very hot in summer and snows are common in winter. It has no high mountains in the interior. It is watered by innumerable rivers and springs. The principal rivers are the Nueces, Guadalupe, Colorado, Brazos de Dios, Trinity, Nacogdoches, Sabinas, and Red or the Natchitoches on whose banks is located the village of the latter name, the first in Louisiana. Excellent pasture lands stretch from the Río Grande[30] to the Trinity, but from there they grow less because the country, which is very sandy, is covered with dense forests of very large pine trees. On the banks of the rivers grow many good timbers and wild trees and shrubs that bear fruit of

[27]Both the "Carta Esférica que comprende las costas del Seno Mexicano . . ." by Juan de Lángara in José Antonio Pichardo, *Pichardo's Treatise on the Limits of Louisiana and Texas . . .* ; translated by Charles Wilson Hackett, Charmion Shelby, and Mary Ruth Splawn and annotated and edited by Charles Wilson Hackett, I, 350, and the map of "El Nuevo México y Tierras Adyacentes" by José Pichardo in Pichardo, *op. cit.*, 474, show the San Bernardo Bay as lying just south of the Isle of San Luis. This bay apparently corresponds to the present northern part of Matagorda Bay, or present Lavaca Bay. In July, 1809, Bernardo Bonavía requested the appointment of someone to make a careful survey for the Port of San Bernardo, near La Bahía on Matagorda Bay. Carlos E. Castañeda, *The End of the Spanish Regime 1780–1810* (James P. Gibbons, ed., *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas 1519–1936,* Vol. V), 381.

[28]"The Carta Esférica que comprende las costas del Seno Mexicano . . ." by Juan Lángara in Pichardo, *op. cit.*, 350, shows the Arcokisas River emptying into Galveston Bay at almost the same location at which the map of Pichardo "El Nuevo México y Tierras Adyacentes" in *ibid.*, 474, shows the Trinity River emptying into Galveston Bay. Pichardo places the name "Orcoquiza" just south of the mouth of the Trinity River. Thus the bay referred to here by Ramos Arizpe was evidently what is now known as Galveston Bay.

[29]Here again the question arises, "Does Ramos Arizpe mean the Río Grande or the Medina River?" It is interesting here to note that this confusion of the Río Grande and the Medina River by Ramos Arizpe in this address was used in 1849 in the discussion of which was the true boundary of Texas. "The Río Grande—is it, or was it, ever the true boundary of Texas?" was the title of a letter to the editor printed in the *National Intelligencer,* Washington, Thursday, July 12, 1849, vol. L, No. 7263, p. 2, col. 6. The author of this letter quotes this address to show that the Río Grande was once the boundary. The *Texas State Gazette,* Austin, Saturday, Sept. 1, 1849, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 11, col. 2, reprints this extract and attributes the letter to John S. Skinner, editor of *The Plough, the Loom, and the Anvil.*

[30]Here again Ramos Arizpe could mean either the Río Grande or the Medina, but probably the Río Grande.

delicious flavor, such as the grape, the chestnut, the medlar, the blackberry, and the walnut. Also it is to be noted that this province does not have thorny shrubs as do most of the provinces of America. It abounds with sassafras, cochineal, indigo, coffee, tea, and *viperina,*[31] which is as sought after medicinally as the *cinchona* [Peruvian bark]. As far north as the Trinity River the province is very suitable for the raising of all kinds of livestock. Small game and deer, *tigre* (jaguar), bear, and otter are most abundant, and in the northern parts the bison or Indian cow abounds. There is reliable information that very rich mines exist in the sierra[32] and outside of it, although none has been worked and improved.

Proverty, wars, and epidemics of smallpox, etc., have destroyed and diminished the many fierce nations of this delightful country. Nevertheless, the Comanches, which are the most warlike, can in a few days assemble many thousands of *Gandules,* that is, men from eighteen to fifty years of age, who are very skillful with the arrow, the spear, and the gun, which they all have of an excellent quality. The Comanches rove throughout the province along the skirt of the Sierra Madre. On the opposite side, that is, along the coast, roam many less numerous tribes of the Caikaches, Malahuites, Arcokisas, Taucanos [Tawakoni], Tahuayaces [Taovayas], and Nacogdoches, who live by fishing and hunting and who leave once a year for the north to provide themselves with buffalo and bear meat. They are generally more peaceful and dependable than the Comanches and Lipans.

No. 7. I have given you, Sir, for the consideration of Your Majesty, a conservative rather than exaggerated picture of the natural condition of the four Eastern Interior Provinces of North America. Their vast extent, their location, their climate, so varied and healthful in the larger part, and their most abundant and varied native products make them worthy of constituting by themselves one of the most extensive and richest empires of the universe. May Your Majesty realize their worth and what may be expected of them. And, if, as you have promised those that inhabit them, you wish to make them happy, allow me to present to you their civil and political condition.

I shall postpone giving an account of their natural and civil history until a time when I have at hand more exact data. For the same reason and in order not to be tiresome, I dispense with describing the successive steps by which the Spaniards have established themselves there, the political plans, as vile as they are arbitrary, that have been adopted, and the oppressions and robberies that have

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[31]This is a medicinal herb known as the *echium* of the *Boraginaceae* family. *Pequeño Larouse Ilustrado,* 953.

[32]He is evidently referring here to the Sierra Madre range in the west.

been committed. Let us at the present draw a heavy curtain over all the past and let us confine ourselves to an explanation of the present system of government in those provinces, noting their evils and asking Your Majesty for the necessary reforms in order that the evils may be rooted out and prosperity may flourish there.

GOVERNMENT OF COAHUILA AND TEXAS

No. 8. In the town of Chihuahua resides a commandant general who is independent of the viceroyalty of Mexico and who has the same and even greater powers than the viceroy. The provinces of Coahuila and Texas, from two hundred and forty to seven hundred leagues distant from his residence, are subject to him in every way. Each one of these provinces has a provincial chief with the title of military and political governor, who, by inherent and delegated powers, has jurisdiction in all cases, being dependent in cases of war and general welfare on the commandant general. In fiscal affairs, he is subject to the intendant of San Luis Potosí, who is from one hundred to six hundred leagues distant, with final recourse to the supreme council of finance in Mexico City; and in appeals for justice, the military and political governor is subject to the audiencia of New Galicia, which is as far away as the commandancy general [in Chihuahua].

Coahuila, which has over seventy thousand inhabitants, contains many hamlets, farming communities, and ranches for the raising of livestock of all kinds, twelve towns of Spaniards, the fertile valley of San Nicolás de la Capellanía, the large neighborhood of San Isidro de las Palomas, five settlements of Indians, who are descendants of the great Tlaxcala, and five missions of natives of that region. They are:

TOWNS

Santiago del Saltillo [Saltillo]
Monclova
Santa María de las Parras [Today Parras][33]
Santa Rosa [Today Múzquiz][34]
San Buenaventura
La Candela [Candela][35]
San Fernando de Austria [Today Zaragoza][36]
Río Grande [Today Guerrero][37]
Nava
Quatro Ciénegas [Cuatro Ciénegas]

[33]Esteban L. Portillo, *Catecismo Geográfico, Político e Histórico del Estado de Coahuila de Zaragoza,* 103.
[34]*Ibid.,* 150; Velasco, *op. cit.,* XIX, 98.
[35]Portilla, *op. cit.,* 148; Velasco, *op. cit.,* 86, 100.
[36]Portilla, *op. cit.,* 195; Velasco, *op. cit.,* 110.
[37]*Ibid.,* 109; Portilla, *op. cit.,* 188.

Nueva Bilbao [Today Viesca][38]
Vaján [Baján]
Valle de San Nicolás de la Capellanía [Today Ramos Arizpe][39]
San Isidro de las Palomas [Today Arteaga][40]

INDIAN SETTLEMENTS (PUEBLOS)

San Esteban de la Nueva Tlaxacala [Incorporated into Saltillo][41]
Nadadores
San Miguel de Aguayo [Near Monclova. Also known as San Miguel de Luna][42]
San Francisco [A presidio near Monclova; also known as San Francisco de Coahuila or simply de Coahuila][43]

MISSIONS

Visarón [Rosales][44]
Dulce Nombre de Jesús [Gigedo][45]
De Peyotes [Peyotes]
San Juan Bautista [Now a part of Guerrero][46]
Nuestra Señora de la Victoria [Now Nadadores][47]

The town of Saltillo, the first settlement in the Eastern Interior Provinces and the town from which the settlers of all the others set out, was founded by 1586.[48] It established for its local government a municipal council of two ordinary alcaldes[49] and a prosecuting attorney, all three elected by the citizens, and six aldermen and a notary public, whose offices are sold at public auction to the sound of a drum. To these has been added a subdelegate general. An office of the royal treasury, the offices for the administration of the tax on tobacco and the excise taxes *(alcabalas)*, and a post office for the interior of the provinces were established in this town. The fertile valley of San Nicolás de las Capellanía is located three leagues to the north of Saltillo. Its climate is

[38]Ramos Arizpe, *op. cit.*, 97, note 45.
[39]Portilla, *op. cit.*, 88; Velasco, *op. cit.*, 134.
[40]Portilla, *op. cit.*, 94.
[41]*Ibid.*, 76.
[42]*Ibid.*, 130.
[43]*Ibid.*, 130–131.
[44]*Ibid.*, 185.
[45]*Ibid.*, 191.
[46]*Ibid.*, 188; Velasco, *op. cit.*, 118.
[47]*Ibid.*, 101.
[48]The date of the founding of Saltillo is uncertain. Esteban L. Portillo in his *Apuntes para la Historia Antigua de Coahuila y Tejas*, 357, and in *Catecismo Geográfico, Político, e Histórico del Estado de Coahuila de Zaragoza*, 75, says it was founded prior to 1560. Mardonio Gómez in *Compendio de Historia Antigua Completa de Coahuila y Texas*, 83, says that it was founded in July, 1555. Alessio Robles in Ramos Arizpe, *op. cit.*, 98, says that it was probably founded in 1575.
[49]An alcalde was an officer that exercised the prerogatives of both a municipal judge and a mayor.

milder than that of Saltillo. Its land, which is level and exceedingly fertile, is watered by several healthful and abundant springs and produces all kinds of fruits. Its population is composed of landholders, all of whom are Spanish descendants of the first settlers of Saltillo. In it and on the ranches and farms nearby live about three thousand souls. The community is erecting a parochial church. The settlement of San Isidro de las Palomas [Arteaga] is three leagues to the east of Saltillo. Its climate is colder than that of Saltillo. It produces the best wheat and all kinds of fruits, and its grape makes one of the best wines of that province. It is populated by Spaniards, most of them landholders, who are under the spiritual administration of a priest. Monclova has two alcaldes and an attorney; Parras, a subdelegate, two alcaldes, and an attorney. All the other towns are governed by lieutenants of the governor, who appoints them by one letter and replaces them by another. The settlements of Indians are subject to the nearest Spanish magistrate, but have their own governors and municipal councils in accordance with the laws of the Indies for local administration but without any independent jurisdiction, all being prescribed by the laws of the Indies. The missions are governed by corporals who, with five or six soldiers, reside in them.

Militia organizations have been newly established; but in Monclova, Santa Rosa, San Fernando, and Río Grande there have always been garrisoned four companies of veteran cavalrymen that continually patrol and defend the frontier. They make up the detachments for the missions, escort the packtrains carrying equipment, money, and goods to the missions from Saltillo, and also twice a month carry the mail from Monclova to the fartherest limits of Texas. The spiritual affairs of all the towns and villages are administered by priests and ministers of the secular clergy and those of the missions by the Recollect Franciscans of Pachuca, all subject to the reverend bishop of Nuevo León.

GOVERNMENT OF TEXAS

No. 9. Texas was discovered and settlements begun there by the inhabitants of Coahuila by the middle of the seventeenth century. It was subject to the governor of Coahuila until 1720. At that time the viceroy, the Marquis of Valero, named as governor of both provinces, the Marquis of San Miguel de Aguayo, who, with five hundred soldiers from Coahuila, re-established the presidios and missions of Texas, which several times had been destroyed by the Indians and one time threatened by the French. At the present, Texas has its military and political governor, and,

after so many years of abandonment, contains in all its vast territory only three towns, which are most commonly known by the names of presidios, and five missions of native Indians of the region. They are:

PRESIDIAL TOWNS

San Fernando or Real Presidio de San Antonio de Véjar [San Antonio]
La Bahía del Espíritu Santo [Goliad]
Nacogdoches

MISSIONS

San José[50]
Espada[51]
San Bernardo[52]
Refugio[53]

San Antonio de Véjar, which is today the capital, has for its local government a municipal council of two alcaldes, an attorney, all three elected, and six aldermen. La Bahía and Nacogdoches are commanded by lieutenants of the governor, assigned and replaced at his will; and the missions are governed by a corporal. In each town a company of cavalry is stationed. Since 1806, military detachments of not fewer than fifty men have been posted on the Guadalupe and Trinity Rivers on the road to the frontier of Louisiana and another at the port of Arcokisas,[54] under whose pro-

[50]The San José Mission is one of the San Antonio missions and was officially established by Captain Valdez, on February 23, 1720. Castañeda, *The Winning of Texas 1693–1731* (Paul J. Foik, ed., *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas 1519–1936*, II), 130.

[51]Mission San Francisco de la Espada is another San Antonio mission, which was begun prior to 1762. Castañeda, *The Passing of the Missions 1762–1782* (Paul J. Foik, ed., *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas 1519–1936*, IV), 9–10.

[52]The mission San Bernardo here referred to cannot be definitely identified. There was a "misión de San Bernardo" in Coahuila. This place is now the town of Morelos. Velasco, *op. cit.*, XIX, 119; Portilla, *op. cit.*, 182. Possibly Ramos Arizpe is here referring to the Mission of Nuestra Señora del Refugio, which was founded in 1793, on San Bernardo [Matagorda] Bay. William H. Oberste, *History of Refugio Mission*, 48–55.

[53]Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio was formally founded on February 4, 1793. Herbert E. Bolton, "The Beginnings of Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio," in Texas Historical Association, *Quarterly*, XIX, 403; William E. Dunn, "The Founding of Nuestra Señora del Refugio, the last Spanish Mission in Texas" in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXV, 181; Castañeda, *The End of the Spanish Regime*, 80. Note: Ramos Arizpe fails to mention the San Antonio de Valero Mission (present Alamo), the first San Antonio mission established (May, 1718), *ibid.*, 411; and the Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña Mission established in July, 1716, just beyond the Angelina River in the middle of the chief village of the Ainay (Hainai). Castañeda, *The Winning of Texas*, 59.

[54]Here he is evidently referring to a place on Galveston Bay; see note 28.

tection some families have gathered. San Antonio and La Bahía are administered spiritually by parish priests, Nacogdoches and the missions by Recollect Franciscans of Guadalupe de los Zacatecas, and all are subject to the bishop of Nuevo León. As a result of the pretensions of the Anglo-Americans on the borders between Louisiana and Texas, the troops of Coahuila, aided by seven hundred militiamen of Nuevo León and Tamaulipas, all under the command of Colonel Antonio Cordero, governor of Coahuila, marched to Texas and to its frontier at the end of 1805. These men, having remained there until the present, have augmented the population of the province to seven thousand souls.

GOVERNMENT OF NUEVO LEÓN AND TAMAULIPAS

No. 10. The provinces of Nuevo León and Tamaulipas were formerly subject to the commandant of these four Eastern Interior Provinces and were included in the demarcation made for the re-establishment of said commandancy in the last years of the reign of Don Carlos IV, at which time Don Pedro Grimarest was named commandant. They are today unfortunately subordinated in military and public welfare to the viceroy of Mexico, some 200 to 300 leagues away. In fiscal affairs, they are subject to the intendant of San Luis Potosí, 100 to 200 leagues away, with the right to appeal to the supreme council of finance in Mexico City; and in judicial affairs they are subject to the Royal Treasury of the same city. The province of Nuevo León has a political and military governor, who has complete authority in his territory in cases of all kinds. Over seventy thousand Spaniards inhabit the province. They are scattered among many agricultural communities, livestock ranches, cities, towns, mining districts, *valles*,[55] and villages, as follows:

CITIES

Monte Rey [Monterrey]
Linares

TOWNS

Cadereyta [Cadereyta Jiménez][56]
Serralvo [Cerralvo]
Río Blanco [Aramberri][57]
Marín, or los Martínez
Punta de Lampazos [Lampazos de Naranjo][58]

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[55] A *valle* is a whole number of villages and cottages in a valley.

[56] México. Dirección General de Estadística. *6° Censo de Población 1940. Nuevo León*, 108; Velasco, *op. cit.*, IV, 96–100.

[57] *Ibid.*, 169.

[58] *Ibid.*, 41–42; México. Dirección General de Estadística. *6° Censo de Población 1940. Nuevo León*, 119.

MINING DISTRICTS

Boca de Leones [Villaldama][59]
Vallecillos [Vallecillo]
Sabinas [Sabinas Hidalgo][60]

VALLES

El Pilón [Montemorelos][61]
Salinas [Salinas Victoria][62]
Guaxuco [Santiago][63]
Labradores [Galeana][64]
Pesquería Grande [García][65]
China
La Mota [General Terán][66]
Santa Catarina

VILLAGES

Boca de Leones [Villaldama][67]
Guadalupe
San Cristóbal [Hualahuises][68]

The city of Monterrey is at present the capital. For its local government it has a municipal council composed of two alcaldes and an attorney general, all three elected annually by the citizens, and four aldermen whose offices are sold by the town crier to the highest bidder. When the governors wish to send to the court a long report in their favor or have some other private aim, they promote the election of four other honorary aldermen, who are always their favorites. I have seen this happen on two or three occasions. This city has officers to administer the tobacco tax, the excise taxes *(alcabalas)*, and the post office, all of whom are subordinate to the corresponding officials in Saltillo. At present the residence of the reverend bishop of that diocese is in Monterrey. Also an ecclesiastical council composed of seventeen members and a considerable number of priests reside there. The parochial church is being used provisionally as the cathedral. Monterrey also has a seminary, a royal hospital, both under the care of the bishop, and a convent of the order of the Franciscans. The population of all the district comes to nine thousand souls. Linares

[59]Velasco, *op. cit.*, 49.
[60]*Ibid.*, 84–86; México. Dirección General de Estadística. *6°Censo de Población 1940. Nuevo León*, 125.
[61]Velasco, *op. cit.*, 143.
[62]*Ibid.*, 53.
[63]*Ibid.*, 135.
[64]*Ibid.*, 163.
[65]*Ibid.*, 190.
[66]*Ibid.*, 146.
[67]Velasco, *op. cit.*, IV, 49.
[68]*Ibid.*, 149.

and Cadereyta have for their local government a sort of municipal council of two alcaldes, an attorney, and four aldermen, to which without any necessity the governors add some intimate friends or favorites of their own with the title of subdelegates. All the other places in the province are governed by lieutenants of the governor, who names them and removes them at will. As a rule they are military men, relatives, or close friends.

No. 11. The province of Tamaulipas has also a military and political governor with absolute powers over all the province. In fiscal affairs, he is under the jurisdiction of the intendant of San Luis Potosí and the supreme council of finance of Mexico City; and in judicial affairs he is subject to the royal court (audiencia) of Mexico City. This opulent province, which hardly existed in the middle of the past century, has today more than sixty thousand inhabitants. They are dispersed on farms and innumerable cattle ranches and in one city, two mining districts, and twenty-six towns. There are fewer than a thousand Indians, some nomads and other neophytes in six missions. The settlements are:

CITY

Horcasitas [Magiscatzin][69]

MINING DISTRICTS

Santiago de Borbón [Villagrán][70]
San Nicolás [San Nicolás de Degollado][17]

TOWNS

San Carlos
Hoyos [Hidalgo][72]
Altamira
Aguayo [Ciudad Victoria][73]
Jaumave
Infantes [Bustamante][74]
Palmillas
Tula
Santa Bárbara [Ocampo][75]
Escandón [Xicohténcatl][76]
Yera [Llera de Canales][77]
Huémes [Güémez]

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[69]Velasco, *op. cit.*, XII, 141–142.
[70]*Ibid.*, 122.
[71]*Ibid.*, 103.
[72]*Ibid.*, 122.
[73]*Ibid.*, 120.
[74]*Ibid.*, 157.
[75]*Ibid.*, 155.
[76]*Ibid.*, 144.
[77]*Ibid.*, 125.

Croix [Casas][78]
Camargo
Mier
Revilla [Guerrero][79]
Presas del Rey [Aldama][80]
Santillana [Abasolo][81]
Padilla
Santander [Jiménez][82]
Soto la Marina
San Fernando
Cruillas
Burgos
Refugio [Matamoros][83]
Reynosa [Reinosa]

MISSIONS

Palmitos
Palmas
Angeles
Paso de Forlón [Forlón][84]
Platanal
Horcasitas

Don José Escandón, resident of Querétaro, having been authorized by the government as early as 1748, founded most of the towns of this province by 1752. He established in each place a magistrate, two aldermen, and an attorney, all elected annually by the people. In 1794, Don Félix Calleja organized the militia forces of this province, establishing a company in each town. And with or without the desire of firmly fastening the yoke of military despotism on those unhappy people, he, in concert with the governor, according to tradition, or at least with his connivance, introduced a new system of justice and government. By this system the captains of the militia became perpetual judges of their respective towns. The first and second lieutenants became permanent aldermen, and the first sergeants became the perpetual attorneys. The administration of these offices, in case of any default, fell to the next in military rank according to military law. Thus in the absence of their higher officers, a sergeant, a corporal, or even a common soldier might become the judge rather than one of the respectable citizens, who, deprived by Escandón and his successors

[78]*Ibid.*, 124–125.
[79]*Ibid.*, 100.
[80]*Ibid.*, 142.
[81]*Ibid.*, 124.
[82]*Ibid.*, 123.
[83]*Ibid.*, 98.
[84]México. Dirección General de Estadística. *6°Censo de Población 1940 Tamaulipas*, 96.

of the right to elect judges, afterwards were deprived of even the less valuable right of electing the two aldermen and the attorney. The towns are completely subject to a purely military order which in itself is inclined toward despotism and is subject only to the command of the governor, who, when he wishes, assumes the administration of all the cases of the province. This province has three companies of regular troops, one stationed in the capital, San Carlos, another in Padilla, and the third in Laredo. In ecclesiastical affairs, the province is governed by the bishop of Nuevo León; and of the twenty-nine parishes in the province, eight are served by secular priests, four by regulars from the province of Michoacán de Querétaro, and eleven by regulars from the province of Zacatecas. The six missions of neophytes are under the temporal and spiritual administration of the barefooted monks of the convent of Pachuca, who are aided by a corporal and six or eight veteran soldiers.

CHARACTER OF THEIR PEOPLES

No. 12. The salubrious air, the agreeable climate, the exceedingly rich soil—all nature invites man to reap the benefit of the easiest and most solid prosperity by means of agriculture, the source of the true wealth of nations. This is, Sir, the most common occupation of the inhabitants of these vast and rich provinces. Agriculture has in general formed their character; and as they have been employed day and night in the honest and systematic cultivation of the soil, from which alone they derive their sustenance, they are truly inflexible to intrigue, virtuously steadfast, haters of tyranny and disorder, justly devoted to true liberty, and naturally the most inclined toward all the moral and political virtues. They are very much devoted also to the liberal and mechanical arts.

These provinces, being by their location the natural bulwark of all the kingdom of Mexico, are in consequence on a frontier exposed to the barbarous Indian nations. Their inhabitants, therefore, are obliged to serve not only as militiamen but even as common soldiers. They are all soldiers; and in Coahuila and Texas, each month they are required to present their arms for inspection. This necessity, otherwise deplorable, has formed in them an extremely commendable character of integrity, honor, and subordination. They are extraordinarily long-suffering under the severest labor and much accustomed to the greatest privations. At times they even live upon the leather of their saddles and knapsacks without deserting nor as much as murmuring. With this combination of such excellent qualities, which result from the celestial climate and

are cultivated by such honest occupations, each citizen becomes a worker, each worker a soldier, and each soldier a hero that is worth a hunderd ordinary soldiers. Let the Anglo-American States tell how their army in 1806[85] was forced to respect the rights of Your Majesty on the borders of Louisiana by eight hundred of these poorly-clad Spanish Americans, who, although they were forced to subsist on snakes, rats, and even the leather of their saddles, had no other desertions than that of the cook of the second in command, who in reality was not a son of those provinces. Let the French General Dalvimart,[86] who, as a consequence of the shameful renunciation of Bayonne, marched at his emperor's orders to take command of the armies of America, tell how he was brought prisoner from those provinces. Let him tell how his flattering promises were not able to break the fidelity of those troops conducting him from the frontier of Texas to New Spain and how his corrupting gold, lavished with profusion, could not buy off his sentinel at Monclova. Let him tell how the excellent firearms, with which he had been provided for use in his flight, could not compete against the extraordinary valor, so characteristic of those people, of the veteran corporal that far from being stopped by a bullet wound, scorned it, drew near to the general, felled him with a blow from the barrel of his gun, knocked out two of his teeth, and broke his jawbone. Let the general tell of the scars that he said he bore as a reminder to all foreigners that might wish to dominate that land.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

No. 13. Public education is one of the first duties of every wise government. Only despots and tyrants keep the populace in ignorance in order the more easily to violate their rights. The location of these four Eastern Interior Provinces, their system of government as well as that of the monarchy, which has been so notoriously indifferent for such a long time have unfortunately

[85]Ramos Arizpe here is evidently referring to the controversy over the Arroyo Hondo territory and the Neutral Ground Agreement of November, 1806. Mattie Austin Hatcher, *The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement 1801–1821*, 116–118; George P. Garrison, *Texas*, 128–131; Castañeda, *The End of the Spanish Regime, 1780–1810*, 265–273.

[86]General Octaviano D'Alvimar, *Dalvimart*, was a French agent sent to the Spanish colonies by Napoleon. He was apprehended by a Spanish scouting party on the Sabine on August 5, 1808. Later he was sent to San Antonio and from there to Monclova, where he attempted to escape. He was later taken to Perote and to the famous prison of San Juan de Ulúa. He was finally sent to Spain on board an English ship. Hatcher, *op. cit.*, 130–131; Castañeda, *op. cit.*, 340–348.

contributed to the absence in these wretched provinces of an orderly establishment of popular education. Only in the town of Saltillo, the first in the province of Coahuila, and Monterrey, the capital of Nuevo León, is there a meager fixed appropriation for the maintenance of a primary teacher. The military posts and larger towns with donations from the garrisons and voluntary contributions of some parents support some inept persons of bad conduct who bear the title of teachers. These teachers as a rule waste their time in teaching the Christian doctrine badly, for they are usually incapable of imparting the fundamentals of a common public education. On the large estates where a large number of servants are used, it is customary to have one or more little schools. But more than once I have observed the care that has been taken to prevent the children of servants from learning to write, because some masters believe that if these children should learn to write, they would seek some other less unhappy way of living and would refuse the hard servitude in which their parents have lived. Unhappy American youth! Is it possible that their masters are trying to stunt the finest natural impulses and to keep man in brutal ignorance in order more easily to enslave him!

AGRICULTURE

No. 14. The valuable field of agriculture, the worthy occupation of man, the school of a thousand civic virtues, the principal foundation of the most solid happiness of the citizen, and the most secure wealth of the state should be in a most flourishing state in these extremely fertile provinces. Their perpetually healthy climate, their nourishing foods, their soil so productive of all the delicious fruits known, and their abundance of water invite man to cultivate them. Because of these bountful provisions of nature, some progress in agriculture has been made even amid the bustle of arms in the province of Texas, while more progress has been made in Coahuila and Nuevo León. The principal products of Texas are today unfortunately reduced to the sowing of corn, a little wheat, and less sugar cane in the vicinity of San Antonio de Véjar and La Bahía. In Coahuila the principal products are corn, wheat, grapes, cotton, beans, pepper, fruits of all kinds, and an abundance of vegetables of extremely delicate flavor. The corn in the worst soil produces a hundred bushels to one and in most of the province even without much cultivation from two hundred to three hundred bushels. It is the basic food of the inhabitants. So much wheat of excellent quality is produced in Parras, Monclova, and Saltillo that after the province has been supplied, sufficient surplus remains to supply Texas, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas, where this valuable

grain is not cultivated. Also forty to fifty thousand hundredweights are exported to the mining towns of Mateguala, Sedral, Los Catorces, and Mazàpil, and other places of the provinces of San Luis Potosí and Zacatecas.

This entire province is extremely well adapted to the cultivation of the grapevine, and, in spite of the extraordinary prohibitions against its cultivation,[87] it forms one of the most productive branches of agriculture in Coahuila. The vineyards of Cuatro Ciénegas and Sardinas in the San Buenaventura district are equal in life, quality, and abundance of fruits to those of Castile. They are most cultivated in Saltillo, where even the Europeans prefer the wines of Palomas to the best of Europe. The exceedingly fertile town of Parras, whose ten thousand inhabitants devote themselves almost exclusively to the cultivation of vineyards, gains its income principally from the manufacture of excellent brandies and of very fine wines, which are exported to Mexico and to other parts of that kingdom.

Unhappy people of Parras. What would your wealth be if you had not had to struggle so long against the most shameful shackles placed upon you by the monopolists and the ambition of two Grandees who oppress the robust arms of your industrious sons! Dry now the tears that the misery of living in a land of abundance has caused you and be assured that the wise tutelar government that has already broken the fetters of the anti-agricultural monopoly will give full encouragment to the development of your luxuriant vineyards and will put you in possession of the abundant waters that nature gave you in order that your vineyards may grow green again and yield fruit in abundance.

The cotton of this province [Coahuila] is not of such excellent quality as that of the southern coasts. Its inferiority comes from the failure to choose the proper seeds and from the absolute lack of laborers who know how to choose the proper soils and who are acquainted with the best methods for its cultivation. When these methods are applied, there is no doubt but that the cotton will be equal in quality to that of Naché [Natchez] and to the best in America. It is produced in such abundance that after supplying the four Eastern Interior Provinces with materials for the finest spinning and the most exquisite weaving, to which the women de-

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[87]Vineyards were prohibited in Mexico. Spain. Laws, Statutes, etc., *Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias*, II, 114–115. Royal orders repeatedly asked the viceroys to prohibit the planting of vineyards. As late as 1800 the viceroy of Mexico was ordered to destroy the vineyards in the northern part of the country. Lillian E. Fisher, *The Background of the Revolution for Mexican Independence*, 144, 415; Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, III, 35; Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Mexico*, III, 613.

vote themselves in a diligent, careful manner, and after supplying the many looms of brown domestic and heavier weaves in the town of Saltillo, thousands of hundredweights are exported to supply the innumerable factories of San Luis Potosí, San Miguel, Zelaya, Silao, León, and other towns of the episcopate of Valladolid and Guadalajara.

Beans and pepper of different species and of the best quality abound. Fruit trees, which are common to both the cold and temperate climates and which produce the most delicious fruits, are cultivated in Saltillo and Parras. The pears and the peaches are the best in the world, and already some olives and almonds are bearing fruit. Throughout the province grow all varieties of leguminous vegetables. Those of Saltillo, which are the most delicious, are cultivated and produced in such abundance that they continually supply the markets of the mining towns of Mateguala, Catorce, Sedral, and Mazapil and a great part of the province of Nuevo León.

In the province of Nuevo León the principal crops are corn, beans, and sugar cane. Of the first, which yields two abundant crops a year, more than eighty thousand "fanegas" [about 128,000 bushels] are harvested annually; and after furnishing the inhabitants their basic food, there still remains a considerable amount to be exported to the aforesaid mining towns. The bean, which also produces two crops a year, yields more than two thousand seven hundred "fanegas" [about 4,300 bushels]. It is used in the same manner as the corn. The most lucrative product is the sugar cane, from which is manufactured four million and a half loaves (panecillos) of raw sugar. At present its value exceeds a hundred and forty thousand pesos. This value would be increased by at least a third if the extremes of temperature of this province did not bring on the severe winter freezes immediately after the burning summer heat. This early and abrupt change prevents the cane from maturing and becoming as seasoned as is necessary for it to produce the purest sugar. Sometimes the crops are even totally lost. Oranges, lemons, and other fruits of the warm climate are grown; but those of the cold climate as well as leguminous vegetables are scarce and of bad quality.

Since the inhabitants of the province of Tamaulipas devote themselves to the raising of livestock, there is scarcely any agriculture except in a few places near the mountains. The principal crops are corn and beans, each of which produces two crops a year and supplies the province itself. Some sugar cane is also raised, but its value does not exceed forty thousand pesos. However, this industry should be more profitable here than in Nuevo León, because of the uniformity of the climate which permits the proper seasoning of

the cane for the development of the purest sugar. In the fields of this province [Tamaulipas] and of Nuevo León, a species of very hot pepper that is called "chiltipín"[88] is harvested in abundance and without any cultivation whatever. In all these provinces this makes up for the lack of other pepper. It is exported to meet the very strong demand of the exterior provinces.

RANCHING

No. 15. As the raising of livestock is inseparable from and promotes the development of agriculture, the inhabitants of these four Eastern Interior Provinces have dedicated themselves proportionately to this most profitable and useful occupation. Coahuila breeds very good hard-hoofed horses, capable of travelling more than twenty leagues a day. It abounds in cattle and goats, the meat of which is so delicious that it is sent dried, as special gifts, to Mexico City. The production of mules is sufficient to maintain a stock of almost three thousand mules for interior and exterior[89] traffic and to furnish besides an excess of more than two thousand for exportation. The most profitable branch of ranching is that of sheep raising, to which so much attention is given that after the meat-markets of Saltillo, Parras, and other places of the province [Coahuila] are supplied with many thousand head for the consumers, great numbers of sheep are exported to Zacatecas, San Miguel, Querétaro, Mexico, and Puebla, where they rank among the best on the market. In this province, large and small game of all kinds abounds, and the most delicious fish is found in the large, perpetual lakes of Parras and Santa Rosa as well as in the rivers.

Texas was formerly covered with millions of wild cattle and horses or mustangs, as they are called there. But because the government has permitted their disorderly slaughter and their exportation for the miserable sum of half a peso a head, today it does not have enough cattle for its small population, and few of the horses are domesticated. It abounds in deer, *tigre* (jaguar), bear, buffalo, otter, and beaver, and also has all kinds of fish in its rivers and lakes and in the ports on the Mexican Gulf. The Spaniards are mere spectators to these extraordinary and profitable resources in which the native Indians and Anglo-Americans carry on a great trade.

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[88]Also spelled chiltipiquín or chiltepín. A small, round, and very hot pepper: *Pequeño Larousse Ilustrado,* 280; Eufemio Mendoza, *Apuntes para una Catálogo Razonado de las Palabras Mexicanas Introducidas al Castellano,* 25.

[89]It is interesting to note that Ramos Arizpe always thought and spoke of these four Eastern Interior Provinces as a whole, as more or less a kingdom unto themselves. Thus *exterior* refers to all provinces outside of the four Eastern Interior Provinces and *interior* refers to that within the four provinces as a unit.

In the province of Nuevo León, all kinds of livestock are raised. For the breeding of horses and cattle, Nuevo León has over ten thousand head of each species. It has also two hundred forty thousand head for the breeding of sheep and six hundred thousand for that of goats, raised especially to be exported in great numbers to Saltillo and San Miguel el Grande and to other places in the exterior provinces. Tamaulipas, being better suited to the raising of horses and mules, has taken a great lead in that field. It regularly raises sixteen thousand head of mules a year and a like number of horses. As the mares of this species serve to augment and reproduce the breed, there is an excess of eight thousand horses annually for profit Also the province breeds much large and small game, the most profitable being that of the deer and jaguar because of their hides. Its plains are very suitable for the raising of sheep and goats, and in the northern part along the Río Grande, these are extensively raised. Its rivers all furnish a great many fish of all kinds, and in the ports of the coast abound bacalao, mullet, seabass, and shrimp.

ARTS

No. 16. A wise government has a distinct advantage when nature prodigally favors the primitive arts and still more when these are found in an advantageous state of development. As the arts are the fountain of public happiness, it only remains to the government to protect them and to aid them by the encouragement of the useful arts (crafts). Your Majesty has seen the favorable results of the efforts of nature and men in relation to the primitive arts. But I shall have gained nothing unless I also explain to you the incomprehensible neglect of the crafts with the firm confidence of inclining your Majesty's paternal attention to their protection and encouragement.

The exceedingly important factories of cotton are in the worst state of decay so that although Coahuila has an abundance of the raw material, it is forced to sacrifice all its advantage to the exterior provinces. They receive the cottton unprocessed and return it the next year manufactured to be sold to its original owners with the extra charge for the freight there and return of more than two hundred leagues, increased by the three or four excise taxes caused by so many sales and resales, the profits of the manufacturers, and the profits of the various contractors who have handled the cotton. The women, who in those regions [the Eastern Interior Provinces] combine a multiple number of domestic virtues difficult to explain even in the most lengthy discourse, without training or machinery but with the slow and laborious use of a wooden hand shuttle, the use of which is shameful to an enlightened government, somewhat re-

duce this shameful exportation by making yarn and fabrics of excellent quality, such as table napkins, hand towels, fine fustians, tablecloths, and many shawls. All are of extraordinary durability and of such fineness that a tablecloth or a shawl is never sold for less than eight pesos and frequently is sold for as high as forty or fifty pesos. They also make ribbons and other articles for domestic use, and in their sewing their cotton threads are generally substituted for silk or linen thread because of the scarcity and expensiveness of the last two. The manufacture of cotton is beginning also to be developed in the town of Saltillo, where now exist more than forty looms for the weaving of coarse fabrics. This industry would be most advantageous, if, the artisans were not, because of lack of protection, obliged to sell at low prices the work of a week's labor in order to supply themselves with cotton for the work of the following week.

The wool, of which two abundant harvests a year are made in these rich provinces, shares the same unfortunate fate as that of the cotton. It is exported to the factories of the exterior provinces, from where it returns in hats, cloths, baizes, braids, thin light serges, blankets, etc. These manufactured articles are sold for prices necessarily exhorbitant because of the freight costs, taxes, and profits that naturally accrue, when all of them could be bought in the province for three-fourths less if they were manufactured there, with the added advantage of giving employment to innumerable families. But it seems that those unfortunate Spaniards are destined to be the slaves of four greedy merchants of Quéretaro, San Luis, etc. Already Saltillo has discovered this oppression and is beginning to teach its industrious children to avoid it by employing them in the running of about sixty looms in Saltillo itself and in the neighboring village of Tlaxcala, where blankets, coarse cloths, and light serges are manufactured. It has also some shops that produce hats of inferior and medium quality. The other useful arts are beginning to be known throughout the provinces. Iron and lumber are manufactured moderately in Saltillo, Parras, and Monterrey; but it is certainly disgraceful that all iron agricultural implements are imported from Puebla, Mexico, and San Miguel.

COMMERCE

No. 17. The nation or the province, which, after deducting from its products all it needs for its own consumption and sustenance, has a considerable surplus for exportation, enjoys a prosperity approximately in proportion to the amount of the surplus. But when this exportation is of the primary raw materials necessary to its own sustenance, far from being on the road to opulence, the nation or province will always remain in a state of servitude, precursor

perhaps to its total decline. Of what advantage can it be to the hungry to have flour if it costs him more than the whole is worth to make it into bread? Such is the case in the Eastern Interior Provinces. They abound in raw materials suitable to every human need, but in order to make use of them, they have to export them raw and receive them again manufactured at the cost of four times their original value. The fine wools, valuable cotton materials, leather goods, livestock of all classes, fruits of the sweat of the labours of the inhabitants of those provinces, are converted into instruments of slavery and misery. They sell this year a sheep for sixty cents, a goat for forty cents, a beef for five pesos; the following year they buy the wool of the same sheep for the sixty cents that they received for it alive; they buy the tanned hide of the goat for sixty cents and that of the beef converted into sole leather for six pesos. Thus the inhabitants are paid for only the hides and wool of their marketable livestock, and even then those of the outside make a profit. The economic slavery of these unfortunate Spaniards is made even worse by the ruinous and shameful monopoly on European goods that takes place in Vera Cruz and Mexico City.

Sir, such is the unfortunate condition of commerce in those extremely fertile provinces that, in my opinion, it deserves the name of horrible and barbarous slavery rather than that of purely passive servitude. The town of Saltillo, situated near the only practicable pass for the four provinces through the great mountain range of the eastern Sierra Madre, is the theater of these shameful transactions. There in September of each year the inhabitants of these four provinces gather at a great fair to pay tribute to their miserable bondage. They are forced to sell their products for a half of the amount that they need to supply clothing and so forth for their families; therefore, they are forced to buy the rest of the goods on credit with the obligation of paying for them with their future earnings. This account is renewed annually and comes to be a writ of perpetual bondage. Frequently it happens that the honest laborer or the innocent shepherd is not able to pay his debt and is ruined at a single blow by being deprived of his scanty possessions.

DEFECTS OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

No. 18. It is a fact as notorious as it is worthy to be wept over that the government of the Spanish Monarchy through error, through ignorance, and many times through family interest or other private designs, in the long space of three centuries, has directed all its efforts only to the luxury, aggrandizement, and extraordinary splendor of its rulers. It is also notorious that, as it

has been impossible always to reconcile these designs with the rights of the nation and the promotion of its prosperity, a terrible clash of interests has resulted between the nation and its rulers. And as might has prevailed, the most sacred rights of man have been trodden under foot and measures adopted to insure on the throne and its surroundings stupidity, arbitrary power, despotism, and a thousand times vice itself. To this end, the other aggregates of ignorance were utilized. The study of natural law and the rights of man was prohibited. For employment in governmental positions throughout the monarchy, frequently foreigners or those of docile, condescending character or with connections with certain persons were preferred to enlightened and well-deserving citizens, because the former were believed most fit for perpetuating that general system of oppression of the people.

In these centuries of despotism and disgrace the conquest and pacification of the Spanish Americas has been successively effected. At a time when there reigned in the capital a positive desire to abolish the wise systems of our venerable antiquity[90] in order to substitute for them new systems more appropriate for perpetuating despotism and arbitrary power and for confounding the dignity and rights of the Spaniards, is it possible to imagine that anyone would possibly be thinking of adopting the most just and liberal systems of government for the vast provinces of America, distant two, three, and even five thousand leagues away with all the vast ocean between? Only a delirious imagination could conceive of such an idea, for he who neither knows how nor wishes to govern justly his own house cannot know how nor wish to govern well the stranger's into which he enters by force. At times we should be honest and consider notorious truths however unpleasant they may seem, for full knowledge of them will not only convince us that despotism has been the common evil of both the peninsula and the Americas, but it will lead us to recognize clearly the necessity of changing the methods or systems, if we wish to promote the prosperity of both parts of the monarchy, in which prosperity the true interest of all the nation lies.

Whenever I behold the Spaniards in America, immediately there flashes into my mind an "adelantado," a governor or a captain general, who, proudly assuming the dignity of a viceroy and proclaimed by the king to be his other self (alter ego), is transformed into a transient king. Master of the sword, of the rod of justice, of peace and war, of reward and punishment, and of the life, honor,

[90]Ramos Arizpe here is probably referring to the period between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries when the towns *(municipios)* and the Cortes of Spain enjoyed a considerable degree of freedom.

and fortunes of the citizens, he is limited not by law but only by the royal will. He has power on all occasions to do what seems best to him and to decree all that the sovereign himself might decree, of whatever quality or condition that it may be, and to oblige all bodies and persons of America to obey his orders without excuse or legal interpretation and without consulting Your Majesty, as if the orders were given under the royal hand and seal. The royal word has been given that all that is commanded, done and ordained in the royal name, capacity and authority shall be held as binding, fast, and permanent forevermore, and I assure you that this word is fulfilled. What a system of government! Would the peninsula be content with it for the brief time that our beloved King Ferdinand is absent?

The kings and many of the ministers under this system of government did not lack good intentions. They believed in tempering this unnatural power in various ways. They ordered the establishment of municipal councils in all the communities and the establishment of courts, universities, colleges, councils, and societies in order that the people of the capitals and surrounding provinces by becoming enlightened might furnish citizens capable of defending their own rights and those of their countrymen and might offset, with their talents and enlightenment and through their representation in the various governmental bodies, the powers of those that concentrate all manner of command in their own hands. A similar effect has also been produced by the commercial corporations and mining establishments and even by the ecclesiastical communities, which have influenced enlightenment in proportion to the enlightenment they themselves have had and have tended to temper and moderate the reconcentration of power in the hands of a single military chief.

DEFECTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE EASTERN INTERIOR PROVINCES

No. 19. But these improvements, such as they are, in favor of those peoples, unfortunately after centuries, have not reached the Eastern Interior Provinces. In them sits enthroned a military rule very similar to that of Mexico in the first six years after the conquest. The military chief of all of them, with the title of commandant general, has equal and even greater powers than the viceroy of Mexico, with only the slightest check in an auditor of war,[91] who in his reports generally does nothing more than confirm

[91] An *auditor de guerra* is a judge appointed to assist military officers with his advice on legal proceedings.

the opinion which the general has already presented. The commandant general resides in the town of Chihuahua in the western provinces, distant five hundred and at least two hundred leagues from the Eastern Interior Provinces.

As every commandant is a military man, from childhood he has necessarily been educated in military discipline and has progressed in his career under the same military code; consequently he generally does not know the civil and political laws and has a habitual repugnance to the proceedings that these provide for political and civil government. Here is the fundamental error of this system of government. The commandant, because of his education and character, naturally wishes to work according to the laws he knows; and, accustomed to being obeyed, he, sometimes without even thinking of it, demands of the peaceful laborer, the quiet shepherd, the industrious artisan, etc., the same blind obedience and the same performance without reply that he has been accustomed to demand of his soldiers. Thus he ultimately develops into a despot and causes the most serious injuries to the people, who would be free of all this if they had a political government that conformed more closely to civil and social laws.

The opinion of the auditor of war does not diminish the arbitrary power of the commandant general in the least, for, as the former is only a subaltern, it is not easy to conceive of his being able to counterbalance the absolute authority of a commandant who does not have to conform to his decisions. In my opinion, the work of the auditor consists in presenting the demands of the commandant and if possible in not clashing with them. The result, therefore, is always absolute command in a single person, who exercises it in his own way, that is in a military manner. And what might be the result, if both commandant general and auditor of war, from a disposition unfortunately not a stranger to the human heart, become corrupt, agree between themselves on their future positions, on the expenses, and the enormous expenditures that they will have to make in order to secure the positions and on the prolonged voyage in order to possess them? Unhappy provinces! I do not intend to involve personalities, but I know that there have been all kinds of abuses, and I only call them to the attention of Your Majesty in order that you may be entirely persuaded of the ease with which a commandant can become intoxicated by such a vast and absolute command. Strength has not yet been given even to the most austere and virtuous person to resist forever the impulse of gold and of the thousand other riches, in which the provinces of America abound and which are frequently offered to tempt and to seduce men, who not being very wise in

matters of government, can do anything in those absolute commands of such enormous extent.

DEFECTS OF THE INTERNAL GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCES THEMSELVES

No. 20. The same vices as those of the government of the Eastern Interior Provinces and even worse ones exist in the internal government of each one of those provinces. A military and political governor that has been raised from a captain, a major, or at most a colonel commands throughout every branch. Is there a sensible man, a lover of social order, that can possibly think that a military man, however honorable he may be, can be capable of directing the government of a vast province in all its various political, civil, economic, and financial affairs? He does not know any laws but those of the military statutes in which he has been educated; he is accustomed to commanding only his company; he does not have a lawyer to advise him on the civil laws. He does not know the gentle character and the innocent habits of the fifty thousand or more laborers, herdsmen, etc., whom he is going to command and against whom he is generally prejudiced, believing them to be tribes of barbarians, governable only by force and fear, when he should at least know that heaven is so generous in America with its mild climate and sweetening influences that it lessens the ferocity of the wild beasts themselves. Only in America could such an absurd, preposterous system be tolerated. The more remote the provinces are from the center of the higher government, the more arbitrary are the governors and the more secure from any responsibility whatever for their actions, even though they cannot defend them by the opinion of a legal attorney, which they do not have. I am, therefore, not at all surprised at the excesses of many governors, at their arbitrariness and despotism. Rather I am surprised, and I shall continue to be surprised that they all have not been uniformly despots and tyrants, since they are destined to govern under such a perverse system that necessarily, no matter how just they may have been, must drive them to one of two extremes—either to become corrupted by evil influences or intriguing writers and to become military despots, which is what happens to most of them; or to become insane and kill themselves, as I have seen the honest Colonel Francisco Ixart in Nuevo Santander. He took for the theme of his madness the repetition of the phrase that a man should not live who as governor of a province did not know the laws by which the province should be governed. It is an absurd system to place the absolute government of the provinces under a purely military command.

This truth, so manifest by the foregoing, will become evident and even palpable if we thoughtfully give our attention to some circumstances relative to the means generally used to obtain these offices. Unfortunately they have generally been obtained by intrigue, bribery, and favor acquired by humiliations and by the vilest and most indecent tricks. Thus the title of governor for five years is secured by an officer by indebting himself for fifty years. He immediately begins his journey, not as a captain of a company nor as a lieutenant colonel, but in a style becoming a governor of an American province. With his previous debt enormously augmented in the peninsula and by his journey, he finally arrives to take possession of his post, but before he has scarcely had time to learn that his salary is barely sufficient to defray his domestic expenses, he receives by the first or second mail bills drawn on him for the various large debts that he has contracted in order to obtain his position and to make his extremely long drawn out journey.

What can this man do? The more honest he is, the greater are his troubles. He appears dejected and attracts the attention of those around him, amongst whom are some ever-present intriguers, one of whom by coincidence discovers the cause of the honest man's embarrassment; and, as there are perverse persons everywhere who want to control the poor governor, a couple of them, taking advantage of the situation, come forward and donate some money to him. From that moment the governor is no longer free; justice now becomes corrupt; and a couple of cunning companions make him the blind tool of their passions and designs. More bills arrive. The governor's embarrassment increases. He remembers that he has a family and that his term of office will end in five years. It is, therefore, indispensable that he live with becoming decency, pay his debts, make new remittances to secure his promotion, and by all means lay by a few thousand dollars for security in his old age. With these motives and with his salary being hardly equal to his sustenance, what step can he take and what impulse can he give to his government however just he may be? Happy would be the provinces if sad and repeated experience had not shown us that in those terrible predicaments, from a certain species of necessity to which the human heart easily surrenders in such struggles, the most honorable and otherwise respectable persons have stumbled and become corrupt. It is necessary to conclude, therefore, that the system of military governments, arraigned by themselves and by the circumstances and the means generally employed to obtain the offices, is absurd and extremely prejudicial to the provinces and even to the very officers that obtain the positions.

DEFECTS OF THE GOVERNMENTS BECAUSE OF LACK OF TOWN COUNCILS

No. 21. That same system, which by its nature is most suitable for the encouragment of despotism, is to the injury of the people powerfully supported by the defective constitutions of some semicabildos or rather the absence in each and every one of the towns and villages of governing bodies engaged in the administration of justice and the supervision of the political economy. It probably will seem incredible to Your Majesty that in all the province of Coahuila, which has over sixty thousand inhabitants in fourteen towns, villages, hamlets, etc., there is not a single municipal council except in the town of Santiago de Saltillo; but the certificate of my election as representative, which I had the honor of presenting to Your Majesty, definitely declares this truth. And why has none been established in the populous town of Santa María de las Parras that has ten thousand inhabitants in its jurisdiction? Why is there none in Monclova that has over six thousand inhabitants? Why is there none in all the other towns as the law commands? The answer is very obvious and is found in the natural opposition of these organizations to a military government. The latter, with a natural inclination toward despotism, wishes to be free to remove and appoint alcaldes or deputies that will obey and will make the people obey blindly. But once established those municipal governments that become the bulwark of the people's liberties and in which each member becomes a father of the republic, the military governments would be deprived of this extensive power.

The province of Nuevo León is in the same condition, since it has seventeen Spanish settlements and hardly a municipal council except those of a defective character in the capital, in the city of Linares and in the town of Cadereyta. The province of Texas has only one in its capital, San Antonio de Véjar. The province of Tamaulipas that has over sixty thousand Spanish inhabitants in twenty-nine settlements not only does not have any municipal councils but has suffered the dishonor of its towns' being deprived of the limited right granted them at their foundation of annually electing two aldermen and an attorney. And what but military power deprived them of this extremely limited right?

In the year of 1794 or 1795, a military commissioner went to that province [Tamaulipas] to organize, in concert with the governor, also a military man, companies of militia in all the towns. Consequently since then not a brief in due form has appeared, for the captain of the company was made sole and perpetual judge, the lieutenant and ensign, the only aldermen, and the first sergeant, the

attorney, with the original provision that in the absence of any one of these individuals, the exercise of his respective duties should fall to the next in command as provided by military law; so that a sergeant or a corporal may become a judge in preference to respectable citizens. This generally happens unless the governor orders otherwise. These monstrosities are offsprings, not of all the governors, as among them have been some of the most just, especially in Coahuila and Tamaulipas, but of the system of government that, being military, naturally leads those that exercise the functions of government to want to measure everything with a military yardstick and to judge everything by the only laws that they understand, which laws are those of the militia.

The governors have readily recognized these vices and defects; but, some not wishing to make innovations, others wishing to make the most of their position and advantages without inventing obstacles, and all being men to whom has fallen a command so flattering to the human heart, either have been disposed to cover up these evils in order to enjoy absolute command or have looked upon even the consideration of the establishment of municipal councils as a crime and have shown a decided inclination to destroy those that already existed. I have witnessed extremely complicated and destructive suits between the governors and some of the few remaining municipal councils in the Eastern Interior Provinces. And it is recorded that more than once some aldermen have had to flee to the mountains in order to escape the displeasure of the governors.

DEFECTS IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

No. 22. Contributing to the almost complete collapse of the administration of justice are the fact that the provinces are located at distances ranging from two hundred to seven hundred leagues from the superior government and the royal courts of Mexico, Guadalajara, and Chihuahua, the nature of the superior government and of the internal government of each province under such mistaken and absolute system, and the lack of municipal governments. The majority of the political chiefs and magistrates, who are military men or of dispositions conformable to the will of the military officer who appointed them, do not have anyone to advise them how to carry on the judicial proceedings with the prudence that judicial affairs require. The courts to which one can appeal are located at a great distance outside the provinces. This makes recourse to them even by citizens of moderate wealth impossible. What protection remains then to those who find themselves defrauded of their property, liberty, and honor by a

third person or harrassed perhaps by an unjust sentence of the judges? Simply to bear the frauds and impositions, to tolerate vexations of every kind in order to free themselves from certain and extremely long persecution on the part of the judge, who in many places is perpetual and against whose action it is impossible to interpose, meliorate or conclude an appeal because of the great distance of the courts outside the provinces and because the appeal infallibly necessitates the expenditure of more than the litigation itself is worth. Many times I have seen respectable and useful citizens suffer such shameful vexations and even die brokenhearted on finding it impossible to recover their property, of which they have been so shamefully and unjustly defrauded, and to vindicate their honor. Also I have seen families of those that have attempted to protect themselves permanently and completely ruined. And I confess to Your Majesty that only the excellent character of those Spaniards can cause them to continue to live in a society under that system in which the administration of justice, the necessary basis of all civilized society, is lacking.

Public administration and the administration of justice are also obstructed by the fact that often appeal has to be made to different and very distance places. From Saltillo, for example, appeal has to be made to Monclova, seventy leagues to the north, where the governor resides; at times it has to be made to Chihuahua, two hundred leagues to the west, where the commandant general resides; at times to Guadalajara, and equal distance to the southwest, where the royal court resides; and at still other times to San Luis Potosí and Mexico City, to the south, where reside the intendant and the supreme council of finance. That there may be no direction from which those unfortunate people are not harassed and distracted, in ecclesiastical affairs they have to go east to Nuevo León, where the episcopal see is now located. From this chaos come a thousand confusions and a necessary complication of affairs that makes the prompt administration of justice impossible and necessarily results in a thousand vexations for those respectable and worthy Spaniards.

NEED OF AN INTERNAL GOVERNMENT FOR THE FOUR PROVINCES

No. 23. From the foregoing sections of this report and particularly from number nineteen to the last, it is obvious that the evils of the system of government of those four Eastern Interior Provinces spring primarily from their not having an internal centralized government for both their purely administrative affairs and their judicial affairs, since the higher officials and the royal courts both reside a great distance outside the provinces. If those great evils

are to be remedied, then it is absolutely necessary to establish within these provinces an internal centralized government for the purely administrative functions as well as for the judicial. What has been revealed from the second to the twenty-third sections of this report on the size of those provinces, their local condition, their products, and the state of their population is enough to incline Your Majesty to take this all-important step immediately. Your Majesty beholds there a territory that covers more than five hundred leagues, located almost seven hundred leagues or at least two hundred leagues from the residence of the higher officials and the royal courts. This territory, separated by nature from New Spain, New Galicia, and the western provinces by the great mountain chain of the eastern Sierra Madre and situated on the long coast of the Mexican Gulf, with the ports of Bahía de San Bernardino, of the mouths of the Río Grande and of the San Fernando, and of Soto la Marina, is united by plains; and not a single fortress protects it from the Anglo-American States. It is a territory covered with the most enviable products and populated with about two hundred thousand of Your Majesty's most loyal Spanish subjects, who urge this measure as the one most likely to provide immediately for their internal happiness and prosperity to which the wealth and location of their provinces so much incline them. I flatter myself that Your Majesty will delay no longer in granting this just petition than the time it takes to turn your attention to this subject, which is so worthy of your sovereign consideration and which occupies too much of the attention of many foreigners. Your Majesty cannot be less just nor have less foresight than the Spanish government in the time of Godoy. Because of the reasons here explained and especially because of the proximity of these provinces to the United States, he decided in the last years to establish in the provinces a government independent of Mexico and Chihuahua,[92] and for this purpose Don Pedro Grimarest was named chief.[93] This being true, how can Your Majesty be expected to

[92]In May, 1804, a royal order was issued dividing the interior provinces into the eastern and western commandancies-general. Manuel Godoy, the Prince of Peace, to whom it was said the Province of Texas had already been granted by Charles IV, originated the idea of the division of the interior provinces. The Eastern Interior Provinces were to include Texas, Coahuila, as far as Bolsón de Mapimi, a part of Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas from the Río Grande west to the Río del Pilón and north to Saltillo and Parras. Such division seemed imperative, after the sale of Louisiana to the United States, as a means of bringing the frontier provinces under closer control so as to offer more effective resistance to the Americans. "British Correspondence Concerning Texas," in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XIX, 297; Hatcher, *op. cit.*, 83–84; Castañeda, *The End of the Spanish Regime*, 289.

[93]At Godoy's suggestion the king appointed Colonel Pedro Grimarest as commandant general of the Eastern Interior Provinces of New Spain. Ashbel Smith, *Reminiscences*, 27; Castañeda, *op. cit.*, 289.

delay a moment in adopting perhaps the only measure adequate to the security of such an important territory? The state of affairs, which, in respect to our relations with the United States, then forced the adoption of this measure exists today and is greatly aggravated as Your Majesty well knows. In no other manner will I answer for those provinces, and in the presence of Your Majesty, I wash my hands of all responsibility for the results, if this petition is not granted.

At the same time that distance and natural separation from New Spain, New Galicia, and the western provinces cause these Eastern Interior Provinces to require an internal centralized government, spacious plains, good roads, and the common course of many of their rivers unite them. And their varied products make reciprocal trade among their inhabitants necessary and in various ways draw them into every kind of relationship. All of these factors contribute to a greater uniformity of habits and customs and make their people well adapted to living together under the same internal centralized government. On the basis of these facts, the former government, after long investigation, proceeded to form all of these provinces into one single bishopric, that of Nuevo León, which is endeavoring to make Saltillo its capital. Sir, the establishment within these provinces of a centralized internal government which, embracing all of them, will look after their safety and will procure their prosperity and the quickest and most just administration of justice is of recognized fairness and of absolute necessity. Anything else is not only unjust but extremely dangerous.

SUPERIOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND SUPERIOR COURT OF APPEALS

No. 24 Now it only remains to examine the kind of government that should be adopted. Undoubtedly that which is most comformable to the incontestable principles adopted by Your Majesty since your installation and recognized as the general bases of the projected constitution should be preferred. If, according to those principles, the dignity of man as constituted in society is proclaimed, if his rights of private property, personal security, and equality before the law are recognized, if despotism and tyranny are no longer to rule over the Spanish people, if all are to be subject to the same laws and those laws are to be formed by their consent, and if government and justice are to concur in promoting the prosperity of the citizens, I most humbly beg Your Majesty in the name of the two hundred thousand inhabitants of those provinces that you will please establish in them a governmental body and another body of a judicial character with the power to act on appeals of legal proceedings. The first with the title of Superior

Executive Council[a] of the four Eastern Interior Provinces of North America should be composed of seven individual citizens of the provinces themselves with two elected by the province of Coahuila, two by that of Nuevo León, two by Tamaulipas, and one by Texas because of the small population of the latter. And the second body with the title of Superior Court of Appeals in the aforesaid provinces should be composed of three judges and a prosecutor, all lawyers and named by the king in conference with the Secretary of State, at which conference they shall have present the written recommendations of the Superior Executive Council of these provinces. Your Majesty will please fix the residence of these two bodies in the populous town of Saltillo, but allow them the freedom, after their formation, to move their meeting place to some more convenient residence, if they should deem such a change expedient.

The establishment of these two bodies is in every way in conformity with the nature of our monarchical government as proclaimed in our projected constitution and very analogous to the circumstances of those provinces and of all the monarchy. The Spanish government is no longer founded on the principles of an absolute monarchy but of a monarchy limited according to the constitution, which, by harmoniously separating the legislative, executive, and judicial powers so tempers power that never will absolute power be exercised by a single person nor by some of the same individuals in its different branches. And once the powers are separated, they should exercise their functions without clashing among themselves in order thus to give their respective branches expeditious direction. And if with so much wisdom the powers of the supreme government are thus separated, why should they not revolve and be divided in the same way in the provinces, at least when taken on a great scale? That the government as it has been constituted in the metropolis should be extended to all the monarchy seems absolutely necessary. And this will be accomplished by establishing in the provinces government bodies that shall exercise separately the administrative and judicial powers as will be the case in the four Eastern Interior Provinces with that Superior Executive Council and Superior Court of Appeals. It is necessary that both powers shall be exercised by several, although in so small a number as is stated, since if they were exercised by only one person, the latter would be without the check that the constitution has placed on even the monarch by placing over him the Council of State and the ministry,

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[a]See Note 1 at last of Memorial.

and we in the provinces would easily fall under the rod of despotism.

The executive council by being composed of citizens of the provinces, elected by them, will form a government that is acquainted with the character of the governed: their interests, their needs, and a thousand other circumstances, all of which will contribute to the greatest prudence in its deliberations and will assure it of the most prompt and willing execution of its measures, since they are to be fulfilled by the same people who have elected the council. From these circumstances will naturally follow the advantages of prudence and of the prompt execution of all measures, which are the precursors of public peace and prosperity. The Superior Court of Appeals, not being concerned with the affairs of government and being located in the interior of those vast provinces, will give swift attention to the administration of justice. The wicked will restrain themselves on being confronted by a body that with impartiality and wisdom imposes on them prompt punishment. The good will wipe away their tears on seeing within their land a court that guarantees to them liberty and security of their personal property. And all will dedicate themselves peacefully to their respective occupations, from which will come the general well-being of the state.

Your Majesty should on no account delay the constituting of these two most useful and necessary institutions. The members of the council should not be paid any salary from the public treasury. They will gladly give the time required of them in order to contribute to the general well-being of the provinces, and if some compensation other than the sweet satisfaction of serving as fathers to those people should be necessary, the provinces will gladly co-operate in providing it. The members of the Superior Court of Appeals should receive a fixed salary from the public treasury; but for this reason it is not necessary to levy new imposts nor to place new burdens on the treasury. Since this institution will reduce the work and affairs of the courts of Guadalajara and Mexico to which these provinces have belonged, some judges' positions should be eliminated, and a part of their good salaries[94] should be assigned to the dotation of the four members that are to compose the court of appeals; and by levying some moderate taxes, the maintenance of the necessary subordinates

[94]At the last of the report Ramos Arizpe makes the following comment: "The author of this report has changed his opinion on the number of judges and their salaries, agreeing with the opinion of the committee of the Cortes, which at his request has examined the report and given its decision on this point."

could be provided. The town of Saltillo will welcome enthusiastically these two bodies representing the sovereign authority of Your Majesty. Saltillo's healthy, delightful climate, its populous community, its very useful and excellent products will provide the greatest advantages to the members; and the magnificent public buildings of that town will afford the most ample accommodations for the meeting rooms and courtrooms and the respective offices of both bodies without any expense for the buying or constructing of another building being necessary. I should conclude then by saying that only the decision of Your Majesty is lacking, which decision cannot be expected to be contrary to the well-being and wishes of almost two hundred thousand Spaniards that inhabit those rich provinces and claim this favor from the paternal heart of Your Majesty.

ESTABLISHMENT OF JUNTAS OR PROVINCIAL DEPUTATIONS AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES

No. 25. In numbers 20 and 21 of this report, I have shown Your Majesty the great evils that exist in the internal government of each one of those four provinces, which evils generally result from the system of government being a military one, naturally inclined to arbitrariness. In order to cure, as Your Majesty has promised to do, such general and such serious evils, it is necessary to establish in each province an *executive council* or a *provincial deputation*[b] to have charge of the administration of all the province and in each community a municipal body or council to have charge of the government of its community. In all of these organizations Your Majesty will only bear testimony to the nation of acting in harmony with the principles that you have proclaimed on the dignity, liberty, and other rights of man. No longer will Spaniards be treated as slaves or as flocks of sheep, but exercising their right to vote for the men who are to govern them in those distant provinces and settlements, they will thank your Majesty for having caused them to recognize the dignity of their position and to enjoy peacefully the rights corresponding to a man in constituted society. These are the wishes and the desires of all the monarchy, manifested from the moment that they threw off the yoke of slavery, which has oppressed them for so long, approved by both the governments preceding this one and finally consolidated and confirmed in Your Majesty. When the orphan state of the nation caused by the shameful imprisonment of our beloved King Ferdinand VII was hardly known and the horrible plot of Napoleon to enslave us was still imperfectly seen, the provinces, having determined to

[b]See Note 2 at end of Memorial.

defend the national liberty and to rescue their king, renounced the old government and established governing juntas. These were approved by the former Junta Central and the Regency, and Your Majesty has strengthened and confirmed them in all the provinces of the peninsula and the Balearic Islands, by establishing one in the great Canary. If we turn our eyes toward the Americas, then we see that in all the provinces of South America, except that of Perú, juntas have been organized, some of which have been approved by Your Majesty. Existing circumstances in North America have prevented the establishment of a similar system of government; but it cannot be denied that much has been thought about it. And I believe that if such had been put into effect by the order of the Supreme National Government, the horrors of the civil war that is going on there and the scarcity of specie in the peninsula might have been avoided. For my part, I can assure Your Majesty, on the authority of official documents printed by the government of Mexico, that my province, Coahuila, when she was invaded by the insurgents of New Spain and deprived of the guidance of her meritorious governor, Colonel Antonio Cordero, discovered her error and, reanimated by her own fidelity, surprised her new tyrants in Monclova. Whereupon her generous and loyal citizens united to form a junta and conferred the military command on Lieutenant Colonel Don Simón de Herrera, a man of recognized talents. He applied himself to all with such activity and ability that in a few days without other resources than the arms and fidelity of the inhabitants, he vanquished in open battle almost all the principal authors and abettors of the insurrection of New Spain, quieted the province, and closed that important door that opens to the United States. A personal letter from Mexico says that in Nuevo León another junta has been organized, which maintains that province in tranquility and good order.

This system of government should be established in the kingdoms and provinces of the monarchy, because it has in its favor the decided approval of the people and proof of its utility and advantages by actual experience. It falls then to Your Majesty to give the order to place all under a uniform system in order to avoid all kinds of future rivalry and complaints. The necessity of establishing municipalities in all the communities is so evident that it needs no detailed argument in its favor. Each community is an association of free men who are united not to be despotically commanded by the strongest as happens with the barbarous tribes but by one or more prudent men, capable of being fathers of the republic. Behold the foundations of the municipalities sustained by laws and customs of Spain and ordered observed by the law of the Indies. And as it

is indubitably true that prudence and other virtues requisite in those who govern the towns are better known to their respective citizens, it is only just that they should be given the right to elect their municipal authorities with the restriction that their choice be subject to the approval of the provincial authority. Thus the system of despotism will be abolished forever. The shameful system of selling public offices at auction will be destroyed. And as the door to public office will open only to the deserving, every citizen anxiously will desire to enter it, and the infallible consequence will be the tranquility and good order of the towns and the happiness and prosperity of the citizens.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMANDANCY OR A CAPTAINCY GENERAL

No. 26. The location of these provinces requires that a military force be stationed on their frontiers and coasts to check the Indians, particularly on the frontiers of Coahuila and Texas, and to inspire the respect of the United States. For this reason, it is necessary to establish a commandancy or a captaincy general in the four provinces, with lieutenants in each province, all of whose powers should be restricted to purely military affairs. The residence of the captain general should be in the capital of Texas, because there the great multitude of barbarous tribes that inhabit that province and particularly the proximity of the United States would require all his attention. The appointment of this chief should be made by the king, but it would be wise for him to refer to the written recommendations of the Superior Executive Council and to prefer always military men who, by having been trained for their career in those provinces, have in their favor the esteem and good will of the people and of the Indian tribes, which, in case of a rupture with the United States, would be of effective aid unless the lack of skill on the part of the captain general should cause them to become dangerous enemies and to join in helping the United States. The great services that Colonel Antonio Cordero y Bustamante has rendered the past few years by keeping the Indians of Texas and Coahuila at peace and by restraining the United States are due to the good reputation that he has acquired among all with his activity, impartiality, valor, and singular wisdom; and no one is more fitted for the execution of that military commandancy.

THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF POPULATION

No. 27. In the Eastern Interior Provinces the memory of Your Majesty will be blessed everlastingly, if acceding to their requests and their very just petitions, you decide on the reforms and in-

stitutions indicated, for only by them will it be possible to restore those worthy Spaniards to the rank of free men, which rank they should have enjoyed always. But a wise and enlightened government does not fulfill its duties simply by placing the members of society in such a position. It is necessary for the government, knowing the flexibility of the human heart, to work to smooth out the road that leads to prosperity, sometimes providing the means to travel toward it, at other times offering such profitable consequences that society will be stimulated to overcome any obstacle in order to secure prosperity. As Your Majesty is highly imbued with these wise tenets, I think I should do nothing more than call the Eastern Interior Provinces to your sovereign attention, pointing out to you the easiest and most convenient methods by which they can be promptly raised to the highest degree of prosperity. Their size, their climates, their products, their excellent seaports invite millions of men to enrich themselves; but never has the government put into practice effective measures for leading men there. This idea has never attained more than the projected stage, as happened in 1805, when an expedition of six thousand married men to go to the province of Texas was planned. Perhaps all the advantage of this or similar measures has not been recognized, nor has an attempt been made to show the Spaniards that it was aimed at making them quickly and permanently rich and prosperous. I, notwithstanding the circumstances in which the nation finds itself, highly recommend this project to Your Majesty as profitable to all that may undertake it, advantageous to the province of Texas that so much needs the industrious workers, and necessary to the nation for the preservation of that important province. In this way Your Majesty will make smooth the principal road to national prosperity and will augment the prosperity of the Eastern Interior Provinces, which depends primarily upon the encouragement of their population.

FREE TRADE AND THE HABILITATION OF THE PORTS OF LA BAHIA DE SAN BERNARDO, BRAZO DE SANTIAGO, ETC.

No. 28. The commercial system, which, although it has enriched a few, has impoverished and kept all the rest of the Spaniards wrapped in misery, has been the most terrible and the most merciless whip from which the Americas have suffered. In all the rich kingdom of Mexico and the boundless interior provinces, there is no other open port than that of Vera Cruz The most shameful monopoly of all European merchandise is carried on there. This merchandise in Cádiz is second-hand; in Mexico, Querétaro, or Zacatecas, fourth-hand; in the great fair of Saltillo, where each

year it is distributed to the interior of the provinces, fifth-hand; and in each of these places, three hundred to five hundred leagues distant from Vera Cruz, sixth-hand. This merchandise carries besides the original price, the export duty of the foreign port from which it leaves for Cádiz; the import duty into that market; the export duty to America, the import duty and other duties of different names in Vera Cruz; the excise taxes charged the seller there; the excise tax charged those who conveyed it to Mexico, Querétaro, Zacatecas, etc.; the excise taxes in each one of these places, where those that carry the merchandise to Saltillo are equipped regularly on credit; the excise tax in Saltillo; and finally the excise tax in each one of the places of the interior of the provinces. These excise taxes are exacted with so much cruelty and tyranny that they are irremissibly collected on the remnant of goods that a poor laborer buys in Saltillo in order to cover his naked wife and also on the rice, flour, and chickpeas that he buys for his domestic consumption. Those goods also undergo the extremely costly freight charges for transportation by sea and for so many hundreds of leagues over land. The foreigner profits, the merchant of Cádiz profits, that of Vera Cruz profits, that of Mexico profits, that of Saltillo profits, and that of each one of the interior places profits; and only the unfortunate and unhappy consumers of the Eastern Interior Provinces suffer the dreadful weight of so many duties, so many excise taxes, so much freight costs by sea and land, so many and such enormous profits. Can it be possible that with a commerce with so many cruel links in its chain any of these provinces can prosper? All of us profess the same law; we are subjects of the same king, children of a common mother, all, in fine, brothers. Then, why do we not enjoy equal rights and share equally all burdens? All ports of the peninsula are open to coast-wise trade and to the trade of the open ports of the islands and America; but all [Spanish] North America is subject to the narrowest funnel at Vera Cruz, without a single boat being able to leave for Havana and the other islands, much less for Spain, from Tamiagua, Tuzpán, Tampico, Altamira, Soto la Marina, Brazo de Santiago, San Bernardo, and other ports, all of which are better than Vera Cruz. The most of these ports are along the coast of the Eastern Interior Provinces, and it is the most shameful injustice to oblige them to receive the goods that enter through Vera Cruz with the additional taxes of which we have spoken when they could receive them in their home ports, conveyed directly from the peninsula or the islands. And if the merchants of the peninsula are allowed to go to the ports of allies or neutrals to bring the merchandise that they need for their use or trade, there is no reason to deprive the Americas of a similar right, for which purpose nature

has provided so many means. Your Majesty is rightly occupying yourself with this most serious subject, on whose decision depends in great part the permanent union of the Americas and the peninsula, who are not the only one interested in the solution. I defer presenting to the government the steps that I believe will lead to the happiness of my provinces and the general happiness of the nation; but I cannot forbear disclosing to Your Majesty that since the first and most effective stimulus on man's heart is his individual interest and comfort, the inhabitants of the Eastern Interior Provinces cannot be tranquil, while the most horrid commercial slavery subjects them to privations and misery. Nor can their population ever be encouraged, as the general good of the nation demands, unless they are granted the commodities that the country itself offers them by furnishing them with rapid and open trade.

And in order to obtain these great advantages, in which evidently the general interest is concerned, it is indispensable to open the ports of their coast and to grant at least temporarily the exemptions which are considered necessary to effect the well-being of those inhabitants, by attracting the largest possible number of buyers and sellers. In 1805, the opening of the port of San Bernardo was proclaimed, but to the present not three boats have entered it. This fact proves that to open a port is not enough. It is necessary to grant for ten years an absolute exemption from duties, because as the coast of Texas is so unpopulated and so far from the other provinces, there is little to attract the buyers to go there and their absence discourages the sellers. The port of the Brazo de Santiago[95] or at the mouth of the Río Grande of the North

[95]Ramos Arizpe here included the following footnote: "This port is, according to a letter that I have before me, at 26 degrees latitude. Its waters unite with the Medina River by a basin extending a half degree to the north. The Reverend Bishop of Nuevo León, Don Primo Feliciano Marín de Porras, in his report on his visit to the province of Texas, dated at Río Grande on June 20, 1806, after having written that this province borders on the Anglo-American states at 32 degrees, says that the Río Grande or Bravo del Norte empties, according to observations made by him, at 23 degrees and some minutes. He describes the fertility of that country saying that its floor is a carpet, a delightful meadow that in general resembles the meadows of Aranjuez, although with incomparable advantages. He says that on returning from Nachitoches, the first town of the Anglo-Americans, he became familiar with the great basin, called 'Española' that from the Colorado River four hundred leagues above that town extends into our possessions for more than twenty leagues, with direction north to south, which has a rising tide and ebb-tide like the sea; and he estimates the trade in furs or beaver and deer hides that the foreigners carry on in that part, asserting that they take out fourteen to twenty thousand skins of the latter species."

Note: The report of Bishop Marín de Porras on his visit to the province of Texas is to be found in *Diario de México*, XIV, Núm. 10993, March 18, 1811,

has in itself and its locality the most desirable advantages. It never has less than thirteen feet of water; it is protected by the islands of the Malahuites, etc.; it is located almost on the boundary between the provinces of Tamaulipas and Texas; and it is the nearest port to Coahuila and Nuevo León. The river is navigable for forty leagues and can be navigated with ease for sixty leagues. Many cargoes can, therefore, be introduced by water, and the great cost of freightage far into the interior of the provinces can be saved. And the freight charge for transportation from Vera Cruz to Saltillo, which now amounts to forty dollars, would from this port amount to only ten dollars. Soto la Marina[96] has many well known advantages also; and once opened as a free port, those interested would themselves easily prevent by means of levies, etc., the settling of sands from the lagoons, which frequently make the bar at the mouth of the harbor dangerous to large boats. Its location in the middle of the province of Tamaulipas causes more than sixty thousand of its inhabitants to ask that it be opened to free trade. The town of Altamira, the last in the south of this province [Tamaulipas] and nine leagues distant from Tampico, has at the edge of its outskirt the mouth[97] of the Panuco and Horcasitas Rivers, both navigable for at least twenty leagues and possible of being made navigable for a much greater distance. The nine leagues that separate this town from Tampico are covered with navigable lagoons, and it is necessary that, upon granting freedom of trade to this port, it be stated that the boats may enter freely either Tampico or Altamira.

Your Majesty should not delay a moment in granting permission for the opening of these ports because they cannot be, by a magic word, peopled as in Spain. On the other hand because of the unhealthy climate of the coast, good policy demands that the establishment of a numerous population in the ports themselves should never be permitted. The erection of some large warehouses in the ports would suffice. We need only to recall the millions of people who have died in Vera Cruz by epidemics to convince us of this truth. And why is this terrible scourge not known in the towns of Altamira, Soto la Marina, or Refugio, located on the Brazo de Santiago? Because those towns have with much fore-

pp. 309–312 under the title "Noticias curiosas del Nuevo Reino de León" and in *Registro Oficial del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*, Año 2, Tomo IV, Núm. 59, February 28, 1831, pp. 234–235; and an English translation in Nettie Lee Benson, "Bishop Marín de Porras and Texas" in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LI (No. 1, July 1947), 26–30.

[96]Ramos Arizpe gives the following footnote: "It is at 24½ degrees."

[97]Ramos Arizpe gives the following footnote: "It is at 22½ degrees according to the letters I have seen."

sight been located several leagues from the extremely hot and humid coast, where that desolating epidemic is engendered. Grant freedom of trade to those ports; and new settlers will be drawn to the nearby towns, and all, being interested parties, will take great care to protect their possessions and the ports themselves. In order to encourage in these provinces the fullest development of trade, in which New Spain and the western provinces are also much interested, it is very important that they be allowed to hold four fairs annually with the goods sold in them during a fifteen day period exempt from duties. The fair of Saltillo, which, although it is now held in September of every year, does not have all the encouragement possible because it does not enjoy any favors whatever, should be one. Another should be held in the capital of Texas to encourage the sale of goods imported into San Bernardo; another, in the town of Revilla located near the Río Grande and the border of the province of Nuevo León; and the other, in the town of Padilla located in the south of Tamaulipas to encourage the sale of cargoes from Soto la Marina and Altamira. When Your Majesty and the Spanish government have given all this encouragement to the commerce of the Eastern Interior Provinces, you may rest perfectly easy and be sure of the fidelity and adhesion of all the inhabitants of North America and may expect the blessing of heaven and of many millions of worthy Spaniards, who, convinced by these practical steps of the justice and of the paternal love of the Spanish government, will disdain the seductions offered by foreigners and other evil persons and will shed their blood for the support, protection, and prosperity of the Spanish government.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONSULATE AT SALTILLO

No. 29. Industrious nations not only try to encourage the growth of their population and to remove the obstructions from the road to prosperity by giving every possible liberty to commerce but also, being well aware that commerce is so intimately connected with agriculture and the industrial arts and is the key to the development of both, take care to establish special bodies, such as consulates, dedicated exclusively to the development of commerce. I acknowledge the advantages which the monarchy has derived from these corporations and that the advantages have been greater in proportion as the number of consulates has increased; but I cannot forbear from mentioning some defects in their system, the correction of which would make them more useful. To whom do the consulates account for the sums, which, according to their established practice, they receive from every merchant? Why should not the towns which support these great con-

tributions know of their application? Since the offices of the president and the consuls are temporary and are regularly exercised by persons of wealth, why should they receive such large remunerations, when ordinary officers of justice do not? Why should the merchants be judged according to their good faith and their knowledge of facts and by a simple process and not also the laborer and manufacturer, who sustain commerce? A minister of justice cannot be a merchant in order that he may not be called upon to decide the cases of those of his own profession with whom he may have interesting connections; but in the consulates in order to obtain justice the judge is required to be of the same occupation notwithstanding that connection of interests, which is so frequent. The consulates should not have any contentious jurisdiction. Every person should be judged by the same judge and by the same process. I know it is impossible at present to reform everything; but these and other observations should be at hand when our commercial code is revised. But meanwhile, it is necessary to encourage the settlement and trade in the Eastern Interior Provinces by establishing a consulate in Saltillo under the plan now followed in Guadalajara. This necessity is proved by the very great difficulty of developing those provinces, because of their distance of two hundred to five hundred leagues from Guadalajara, to which consulate they belong only in order to support it but from which they receive not the least benefit not even to the extent of their suits receiving prompt attention, for their suits are usually tried by the court of the first instance and because of the present state of their commerce, particularly at the fair of Saltillo, where more than a million-dollar business is transacted yearly.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

No. 30. In the thirteenth section of this report, I revealed the lamentable and even shameful state of public education in these Eastern Interior Provinces. Nor could it be otherwise under the system of government, which has hitherto been pursued, or rather in the general misgovernment which has existed. It will be sufficient for Your Majesty to adopt a new system, as analogous as possible to that which I have proposed, in order that many advantages may result in a matter of the greatest importance and of the first obligation in an enlightened government. The Superior Executive Council, the provincial deputations, the municipalities, and even the consulate, it is to be hoped, shall in every way encourage the establishment of public schools and academies for the education and enlightenment of those people, which should be the first basis of general felicity. The reverend bishop of that vast

diocese and the worthy clergy undoubtedly will co-operate in aims so appropriate to their established practices, and Your Majesty, when it is possible, should promulgate a general system of public education, capable of speedily guiding the Spanish youth to that degree of excellence and brilliancy of which their great character is susceptible. On the basis of these principles I have pledged myself to beg Your Majesty please to establish a royal university in the capital of the bishopric. At the present this university could be united with the College Seminary. When it has acquired sufficient funds, it can be moved to a separate building. While its statutes are being formed, it should be governed as nearly as possible by those of the University of Guadalajara in New Galicia, and the institution and its individuals should enjoy the same rights, powers and pre-eminences as the said University of Guadalajara.

The establishment of a royal college in the city of Saltillo is also indispensable. Its population with that of the adjoining town of St. Esteban amounts to more than thirteen thousand souls. Its cool, healthy climate, the great encouragement that agriculture and the arts receive there, and the advantage of being able to take possession of a building erected next to the church of San Juan Nepomuceno with this object in view offer the greatest inducements for this great establishment, which will always be under the protection of Your Majesty and in which all the sciences may be taught. The government should not delay action on this matter either because of the question of whether or not there are sufficient funds nor for any other reason. Let the authority to form that establishment be granted and leave it to the interior government and to the inhabitants of those provinces to put it into effect. Such is the desire that they have always had to be enlightened that they will make the greatest sacrifices to have within their bounds an establishment in which this enlightenment may be accomplished without its being necessary for the fathers to run the risk of sending their children to study in Mexico City and Guadalajara, where many of them, because of the lack of scientific establishments to which they may return for employment, establish themselves, abandoning their families and depriving the provinces in which they were born of their talents.

TITLES OF CITY

No. 31. Whoever studies the human heart understands the ease with which it may be turned toward the good, not only by real and positive interests but also by certain attractions founded only on glory and honour. On this principle the wisest princes

have found an inexhaustible treasure in the bestowing of titles and honorable distinctions, with which by rewarding the good conduct of men and of cities, they have at the same time stimulated others to imitate this good conduct. Your Majesty has the opportunity of drawing upon that treasury of honor in favor of the meritorious Eastern Interior Provinces. And I in their name ask Your Majesty to be so kind as to honor the province of Coahuila, which I have the honor of representing, by granting the title of city to its three principal towns, which are Santiago de Saltillo, Santa María de las Parras, and Santiago de la Monclova, and also to Real de Santiago de Borbón of the province of Tamaulipas. Saltillo has more than ten thousand Spanish inhabitants, is the oldest place in all the four provinces, and has the special virtue of having at all times furnished innumerable colonists for the population of all four. Since it is located on the frontier, it has always defended itself against the savages at its own cost and without causing any expense to the royal treasury for the support of regular troops. Its magnificent temples, its squares, its buildings, particularly the government buildings, and all its perspective claim the honorable title, of which the enlightenment of the citizens will not be unworthy. Always and particularly in the last three and one-half years of the revolution its population has proved its patriotism and its decided love for its legitimate sovereign by large donations, by personal services, and by other demonstrations of the purest fidelity. Santa María de las Parras also has more than ten thousand inhabitants. Its churches, squares, and public and private buildings place it on a level with many cities even of Europe. It has always distinguished itself by its fidelity and patriotism, making at the present time large donations with which to sustain the war. Being located on the frontier of barbarous nations, it has defended always itself by the arms and blood of its children, without any cost to the treasury; and, emulating the distinguished services of Saltillo, it has sent, in conjunction with the latter, a large number of its militia to the province of Texas to aid the veteran troops which advanced to the frontier of the United States. Monclova has over six thousand inhabitants, good temples, squares, and public and private buildings, among which the military hospital is the most outstanding. It has always been the permanent residence of a veteran cavalry company, the greater number of which are natives, who have performed many signal services for the country. It is the actual residence of the governor of the province and at the present time has manifested its fidelity by large contributions and by eminent services, which newspapers of the government of Mexico verify. Real de Santiago de Borbón

has more than three thousand inhabitants. It has the glory of bearing the surname of our beloved King Ferdinand VII. It always has proved its fidelity, but in the present national revolution it has distinguished itself from the beginning by doubling its large contributions, by offering all its citizens to the government, and by taking in that remote country the oath to the national government and to our captive king before any other town with such demonstrations of fidelity as to fill all the towns of those provinces with patriotic enthusiasm and the firmest adherence to the national cause, according to the printed report which it presented to Your Majesty. The aforesaid places without doubt merit the title that they solicit. Your Majesty in granting them will give proof of your appreciation of the virtues of the people, will bind their inhabitants with the sincerest gratitude, and at the same time will stimulate all the other towns to aspire to elevate themselves to the same level by the exercise of civic virtues.

I have, Sir, placed before Your Majesty what I have thought necessary in order for you to form some idea of the natural, civil, and political condition of the four Eastern Interior Provinces in the kingdom of Mexico, of their system of government, and of the reforms and establishments of which they have need in order in the shortest time to reach prosperity. It only remains to Your Majesty, animated as always by the liveliest desires to promote the general happiness of the Spanish Nation, to apply with the wisdom and good sense that characterizes you, your powerful hand to that great and important part of the monarchy. In the meantime, in fulfillment of my duties, I remain at hand to give particular information upon any of the points included in this memorial and upon whatever else may lead to the happiness of my province and of the Spanish nation in general.

Cádiz, November 1, 1812.

Sir: José Miguel Ramos de Arizpe

Note 1. This system adopted, the Sovereign Congress should by an ordinance unfold in detail the powers of these bodies as has been done in relation to the executive councils (juntas) of the peninsula and its islands, in which case it would be wise to declare that the President should be elected by the members of the body itself. The ordinance should fix the term of office and the powers of the president giving him the power to execute expeditiously the government of the province, with responsibility to the Supreme Government; the other members having consultative vote and deliberative power only in important matters of state. The manner in which the provinces shall elect their respective members and the time at which they shall be replaced so that every three years

or at least every five years the body shall be completely renewed should also be fixed.

Note 2. Granted the system of Superior Executive Councils in the kingdom or let us say in the great provinces, it seems that the juntas that have been known up to now by that name and are included in these great territories should have within themselves their free territorial government in economic affairs or, shall we say, in domestic affairs, and should be directly subordinated to the higher body in general and common affairs, the Congress determining by means of the ordinance suggested in note 1 the manner of forming that government by deputations, their powers, term of office, and mode of renewing themselves.

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